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ABSTRACT

Learning and training in school-based new apprenticeships (SBNAs) in Australia were examined through a survey of school-based new apprentices in Queensland, Victoria, and South Australia. Of the 2,330 questionnaires sent, 641 (27.5%) were completed. Compared with their counterparts, students undertaking SBNAs were more likely to be living outside a capital city, less likely to aspire to immediate university entrance, and disproportionately of lower socioeconomic status. Their main motivation for undertaking a new apprenticeship was to gain the associated qualification or specific experience in an industry area. Most respondents were very satisfied with their jobs, and the learning outcomes they reported on several measures were greater than those reported by ordinary part-time workers. The respondents generally saw off-the-job training as adding to their learning both theoretically and practically. The following were among the issues regarding SBNAs that were identified by the study: the low number of hours worked compared with the total number of hours normally involved in completion of a traineeship or apprenticeship; the concentration of SBNAs in those industries that are also the most common site of ordinary part-time work; and evidence of poor quality of training provision by some registered training organizations. (Thirty-three tables/figures, 16 endnotes, and 27 references are included. The questionnaire is appended.) (MN)

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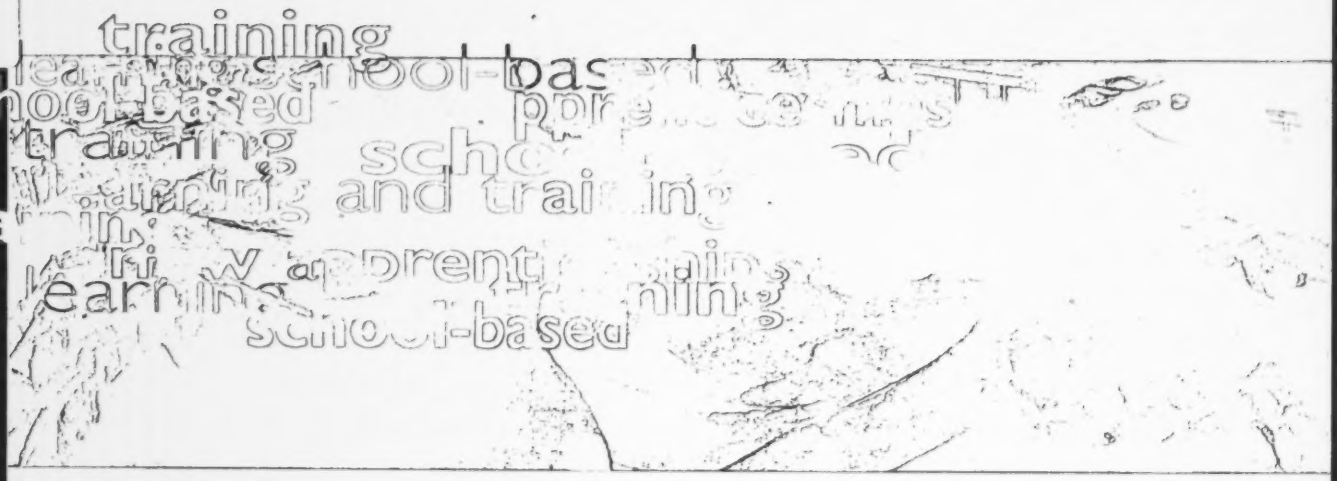

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Executive summary

This project set out to examine learning and training in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Surveys were sent to a sample of school-based new apprentices (SBNAs) in the three states with the highest numbers: Queensland, Victoria and South Australia. In all, the 641 responses represented almost 12% of all SBNAs in those three states.

Those students undertaking school-based new apprenticeships were found to be more likely than average to be living outside a capital city and less likely to aspire to immediate university entrance than other students. There was some evidence that they were drawn disproportionately from students of a lower socio-economic status. Most were trainees rather than apprentices, undergoing shorter contracts of training and undertaking qualifications at Certificate II level.

Students' motivation for undertaking an SBNA was found to be primarily to gain the associated qualification or to gain specific experience in an industry area. Some said that they found the prospect of the mix of work and study attractive. A small group undertook an SBNA primarily to help get part-time work while at university. Generally the students had found out about school-based new apprenticeships through school. This was particularly so for those who were working for Group Training Companies rather than directly for an employer. Exactly half of the SBNAs were working in retail or fast food, cafes and restaurants; and farming, forestry and mining accounted for almost 11%.

The number of hours spent at work differed very little from the average for normal part-time work for Australian school students. The average number of hours worked was 10.5 per week. More than half of the students worked extra hours in the school holidays and many undertook 'blocks' of off-the-job training in the holidays, too. Some students undertook all their work outside school hours while others missed school time. This quite often created severe timetabling difficulties and many did not receive much help from their schools in resolving the difficulties. However, few students found it difficult to fit study in as well as work, in a more general sense.

Most students were very satisfied with their jobs although the degree of satisfaction varied with industry area. They were more likely than students in ordinary part-time jobs to enjoy their job, to have the close attention of a supervisor, to work with adults rather than other teenagers, and to have higher levels of responsibility. The comparisons with ordinary part-time jobs were made on the basis of results from a previous study by the research team.

Learning outcomes reported by school-based new apprentices were greater on several measures than those reported by ordinary part-time workers. These included development of generic skills, amount of formal training given, and the extent to which the young people felt clear about their workplace tasks. It was found that the links between workplace learning and school were greater than for students undertaking ordinary part-time work.

Off-the-job training was generally seen by the SBNAs to add to their learning, in both theoretical and practical ways. Most, however, preferred on-the-job to off-the-job training. Some students had complaints about their training providers. Schools scored lower than

other training providers on some measures, as did distance and online learning. About a quarter of the SBNAs were undertaking fully on-the-job apprenticeships and traineeships. Retail and fast food were more likely to be on-the-job than other industry areas.

While the overall findings of the study were very positive, the authors identified a number of issues. These included:

- the low number of hours worked when compared with the total number of hours normally involved in the completion of a traineeship or apprenticeship
- the possible consequences for student well-being of spending school holidays catching up working hours or attending a training provider
- the concentration of SBNAs in those industries which are also the most common site of ordinary part-time work.
- the evidence of poor quality of training provision by some Registered Training Organisations
- timetabling problems and the seeming unwillingness of some schools to offer solutions.

Introduction

This project set out to examine learning and training in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. In school-based new apprenticeships (SBNAs[1]) young people are employed and engaged in a contract of training while still involved in full-time, or in some cases part-time, school studies. Although the program began only in 1997, there are now many thousands of young Australians involved in SBNAs.

An earlier research project (Smith & Green 2001), examining school students' learning from paid work, vocational placements and work experience, found exceptionally high learning outcomes from SBNAs. Young people in these arrangements appeared, from the results, to have quite superior training and learning experiences to young people in other part-time jobs or young people in vocational placements. However the sample methods used in that earlier study captured only a small number of school-based apprentices and trainees, and hence this important finding needed to be tested on a larger group. The current project therefore set out to test the finding on a substantial sample of SBNAs in the three Australian states with the largest numbers of young people in such arrangements: Queensland, Victoria and South Australia.

General context

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships need to be seen in the context of several developments in the area of young people's employment and post-compulsory education:

- Attention paid to apprenticeships and traineeships as important forms of entry-level training, particularly for young people. A recent suite of research projects commissioned through the National Research and Evaluation Committee has resulted in two publications from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research: Robinson (2001) and Smart (2001). These publications document the growth in these forms of entry-level training, the pre-eminent place held by Australia in this respect, and specific issues such as learning and assessment and retention among apprentices and trainees. Other recent work on apprenticeships and traineeships examines learning issues such as the relationship between on- and off-the-job learning, and strategies used by employers to train apprentices and trainees (Harris et al. 1998; Smith 2000).
- Growth of vocational education and training (VET) in schools programs. From a low base in the mid-1990s, the delivery of accredited VET programs in schools—courses leading to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification—has grown considerably. Ninety per cent of schools offering senior secondary programs now offer VET in schools programs and over 150 000 students were involved in such programs in 2000 (MCEETYA 2001), with just under 60% of these undertaking work placements as part of the programs. These figures do not include SBNAs.
- The prevalence of part-time work among senior school students. Estimates of participation in part-time work are generally around 60% of students in years 11 and 12 (Smith & Green 2001). SBNAs reflect, in part, a wish to integrate such activities into the school curriculum and to enable students to receive qualifications or other recognition for their work.

- Continuing concern with the safe transition of young people from school to work (Frost 1998) and the search for innovative methods of achieving this (MCEETYA 2001).

What are school-based new apprenticeships?

In an SBNA, the student, while counting as a full-time school student, is employed part-time as an apprentice or trainee (Frost 1998). As with other apprentices and trainees, a contract of training is established which is registered with the appropriate state registration authority. Thus the student, as part of the contract of training, gains a VET qualification which is most commonly at AQF level 2. In addition the training generally counts towards the student's senior secondary school certificate and in some cases for tertiary entrance ranking. Policies on these issues vary from state to state and sometimes between industry areas. Schools are not funded in all states for their students' involvement in SBNAs[2].

The student is paid for the time spent at work and in formal off-the-job training. Off-the-job training is conducted at a registered training organisation, which may be TAFE or another provider, although in some cases some of the training may be 'sub-contracted' to the student's school, and in other cases may be conducted entirely on the job. While ideally the student should work half-time (DETE 2001) if he or she wishes to complete a traineeship during years 11 and 12 of high school, in many cases the student works for only around one day a week (Andrews et al. 2000). Extra hours may be fitted in at weekends and in school holidays. Since apprenticeships normally last for four years, they can never be completed while at school. Most SBNAs are, therefore, trainees rather than apprentices (Andrews et al. 2000).

Growth

SBNAs were introduced in 1997, arrangements having been established by the Ministerial Committee for Employment, Education, Trainingand Youth Affairs in June of that year. Commencements in SBNAs increased rapidly from 1591 in 1998, to 4288 in 2000 (MCEETYA 2001). In 2000 there were 5957 in training, greater than the number of enrolments because most SBNAs extend over more than one calendar year. Malley, Ainley and Robinson (2001) report that 15% of school-industry programs now comprise SBNAs. SBNAs can only be introduced where industrial awards or other arrangements allow for part-time apprenticeships and traineeships. In some cases school students undertake part-time traineeships which have no connection to school (Smith & Green 2001). These are not included in SBNA figures and are recorded separately in state training authority data collection in most states (but not South Australia). From 2002, the introduction of a new national contract of training will see SBNAs recorded separately in all states.

The three states in this study (Queensland, Victoria and South Australia) have the highest numbers of SBNAs among states and territories. In 2000, the latest year for which figures were available at the time when this report was written, numbers of SBNAs were as follows (table 1).

Table 1: SBNAs in 2000: Commencements and numbers in place

State	SBNAs commencing 2000	SBNAs in place 2000
Queensland	2842	3687
Victoria	486	841
South Australia	389	553

Source: MCEETYA 2001, p.29

The main industry groups in the three states were sales and personal services, tourism and hospitality, business, information technology, and automotive. Queensland had high numbers in some other areas such as building and construction and textiles, clothing and footwear. The industry areas for SBNA differed from VET in schools industry areas in some respects, particularly in the high numbers in sales and personal services and in automotive (MCEETYA 2001, p.16 & 29). The high numbers in the former reflect the fact that retailing is the predominant industry of employment of school students, and also the preference of the retail industry for employment-based rather than placement-based programs, as expressed by the national Wholesale Retail and Personal Services (WRAPS) industry training advisory board.

Malley et al. (2001) found that, compared to other school-industry programs, SBNAs were more likely to:

- have nominated supervisors in the workplace
- use structured learning principles for both industry specific skills and key competencies
- use formal reporting and assessment techniques
- include assessment by workplace supervisors
- have management committees which include employers.

Descriptive literature

Much literature on SBNAs tends to fall into the following categories, in common with VET-in-schools literature (Smith & Green 2001):

- *Scoping*—detailing the size and institutional arrangements for SBNAs (Malley et al. 2001; MCEETYA 2001; Education Outcomes Research Unit 2001; Price 1999: Training Agenda 1998b).
- *Celebrating success*—describing case studies selected to showcase the concept. These include Irwin (1999) describing Australian Capital Territory construction industry SBNAs; VETNETWORKER (1999) describing Aboriginal SBNA programs in the Northern Territory; VETNETWORKER (2000) describing company sponsorship of SBNAs in production horticulture; and Grace (2000) outlining two SBNA projects in Queensland.
- *Guides*—published in each state for the use of those involved in SBNAs, particularly schools and employers (DETE 2001, an extremely detailed and comprehensive example).

Research

Only a small body of literature on SBNAs is research-based. This body includes two studies which were carried out before SBNAs were introduced, to gauge potential employer support for them. McPhee and Shearer (1997) prepared a report for the MCEETYA task force on MAATS[3] in schools. Their interviews were mainly with the business community and with industry training advisory bodies although they did interview some state training and education authority staff. Their report indicated that industry welcomed the idea of SBNAs although wished to ensure minimum disruption to production as a result of participation. Various concerns about payment of SBNAs were raised which appear to have been largely overcome in the implementation. In general this early report appeared to over-estimate the difficulties of introducing SBNAs and underestimate the potential demand. A NSW TAFE survey (Moore & Colley 1997, in *Training Agenda* 1998a) also found employers somewhat hesitant about taking on an SBNA. The NSW study found, moreover that employers would prefer their SBNA to work for more than 11 hours a week.

Research into SBNAs in operation has been carried out by Frost (1999) who interviewed public sector SBNAs in Western Australia. Frost found that in general these programs were successful, although he identified some difficulties. Frost (1998) also makes a useful critical contribution to the literature in a conference paper which summarises the arguments for and against SBNAs. Frost describes the variety of ways in which implementation has been carried out across the state and territories, discusses the role of schools as brokers, outlines the reasons why group training companies have had a major role in SBNAs, and outlines some of the difficulties inherent in the program. Some of these difficulties are listed below in the section on learning in SBNAs.

The most comprehensive and critical, research has been carried out by Andrews, Kenman and Smith (2000) in Queensland. Queensland had 60% of SBNAs in 1999; hence the evaluation was of national significance. The evaluation found a number of successful features including the low level of cancellations compared with other apprenticeships and traineeships, the role of SBNAs in the retention of some young people at school, the satisfaction of some young people with the non-academic nature of the training and the creation of new jobs in some cases. Problems included the wide dispersion of the relatively low numbers of SBNAs across the school system, timetabling problems in schools (partly associated with the first point), funding issues and lack of co-ordination at the interface of SBNAs with other VET in schools initiatives. According to Andrews et al. (2000), some schools appeared to disapprove of SBNAs and only catered for them if students insisted. Andrews et al. 2000, pp.33–34) developed a typology of support for SBNAs at school:

1. Self-help model—where students made their own support arrangements, sometimes with suggestions from school sources.
2. Supported model—where regular meetings took place for example with a co-ordinator at the school.
3. Managed model—where the school was proactive, for example in arranging timetables to maximise learning opportunities for SBNAs.

As part of a wider review of apprenticeships and traineeships in Victoria, Schofield and Associates (2000) reported some findings on SBNAs. These were derived from interviews with various stakeholders. Stakeholders believed that SBNAs offered benefits to students, particularly to rural and regional students, but had some concerns about funding issues, and the place of SBNAs as a part of VET in schools within the school curriculum. They also expressed concern about articulation arrangements through to university; and about a perceived potential for lower quality in SBNAs than ordinary apprenticeships and traineeships[4]. Schofield et al. (2000) drew some of their conclusions from an evaluation, by the Office of Schools, of pilot SBNA programs in 1998 in Victoria. They concluded that there were mixed feelings about SBNAs among Victorian stakeholders, reporting some misgivings about the quality of off-the-job training.

Learning

While the research described in the previous section has added to our understanding of SBNAs it has not examined in detail learning outcomes. The findings in Andrews et al. (2000) and Schofield et al. (2000) relating to satisfaction with registered training organisations and related issues, give us some insight into learning but do not directly examine learning and training. These findings are included in the summary list below.

Smith and Green (2001) in the research project which gave rise to the current study, examined school students' learning in the workplace in work experience, vocational placements, and paid work. SBNAs were identified separately in the paid work responses. Using various

measures of learning and training, SBNAs were found to be the best method of workplace learning for school students; while part-time work was found to have the greatest learning outcomes, SBNAs exceeded other forms of part-time work. However, only 28 SBNAs were captured in the 1451 responses to that study; hence the current study is designed to test this finding in a large sample.

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) has commissioned a national evaluation of the implementation of SBNAs. This project will examine five major issues of which one relates directly to learning. The five issues are:

1. structural issues
2. funding arrangements
3. nationally consistent processes
4. student outcomes
5. principles and framework for SBNAs

The project is due shortly and on completion will be a useful addition to the literature.

Features of previous research relating to learning and training

The following points summarise previous research findings about students and employers involved in SBNAs which may impact upon learning and training.

Positive features

- Employers see SBNAs as a useful recruitment tool, especially in industries with a high labour turnover (Frost 1998; Andrews et al. 2000) and those with recruitment difficulties (Schofield 2000).
- SBNAs can be seen as a career 'try-out' activity (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Students are introduced to the TAFE learning environment (Frost 1998).
- Students have better contracted training outcomes post-school than the average (Education Outcomes Unit, 2001).
- Employers are favourably disposed towards SBNAs as very young learners (Andrews et al. 2000).
- An SBNA may grow out of a previous vocational placement and possibly an earlier period of work experience (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Payment for SBNAs means some students can continue with school rather than leave to earn an income (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Some students plan to use their AQF qualification to link to further education (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Some school-based apprentices like the security of knowing their employment will continue after they leave school, removing year 12 anxiety (Irwin, 1999).

Difficulties

- Most students work too few hours, eight or nine hours per week (Andrews et al. 2000), whereas the optimum contract is half-time (DETE 2001).
- On the other hand, working long hours as an SBNA may put 'excess pressure' on students (Schofield et al. 2000).

- Employers may find it hard to 'save' useful training tasks for when the trainee is due in to work (Frost 1999).
- Most schools only have a few SBNAs, meaning students need to take a great deal of responsibility for organising their work and study (Frost 1998).
- Students may lose the chance to be funded for another post-school contracted training course at the same Australian Qualifications Framework level (Andrews et al. 2000). (This depends on individual state funding policies.)
- Some employers find the bureaucratic procedures too difficult (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Schools are rarely 'extremely' satisfied with the learning provision from registered training organisations; dissatisfaction appears to be greater where the SBNA is on-the-job. There are several examples of registered training organisations merely giving workbooks to SBNAs to complete on their own (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Schools are hesitant to offer advice to employers on choice of training provider, whereas employers would welcome advice (Andrews et al. 2000).
- There is only limited evidence of extra assistance being offered to equity groups (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Employers prefer applicants for SBNAs to be carefully screened but schools are unwilling to do this (Andrews et al. 2000).
- Timetabling difficulties[5] mean students may miss out not only on lessons but also on extracurricular activities such as sport or drama (Andrews et al. 2000).

Research method

A reference group was set up consisting of senior officers responsible for the management of school-based new apprenticeships in three states, representatives from the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation, the executive officer for the Ministerial Committee for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs taskforce on Transition to Work, an industry representative, and the co-author of the research project from which this project sprang (Smith & Green 2001). Using these and other contacts within the school and Vocational Education and Training (VET) sectors, the somewhat scanty literature, including unpublished reports, on SBNAs was identified and obtained.

The major research method for the project was a survey[6] of students undertaking school-based new apprenticeships. The project wished to compare the findings among a large sample of SBNAs with some of the findings of the previous project (Smith & Green 2001). Therefore the questionnaire (appendix 1) incorporated some of the same questions, particularly those relating to student characteristics and learning and training issues. Several other questions were added as a result of the review of the literature on SBNAs, literature on apprenticeships and traineeships more generally, and the input of reference group members and other stakeholders. In addition, a question relating to non-completion was adapted from a project on completion rates among apprentices and trainees (Cully & Curtain 2001), with permission.

While the research team was warned against making the questionnaire too long, piloting with a group of retail SBNAs in South Australia indicated that the length of the questionnaire was not a problem. The response rate and quality of completion of the questionnaire vindicated the decision to proceed with a questionnaire which included over 50 questions and was eight pages long. Amendments were made to the questionnaire as the result of the pilot and additional helpful feedback from reference group members and the NCVER reviewer.

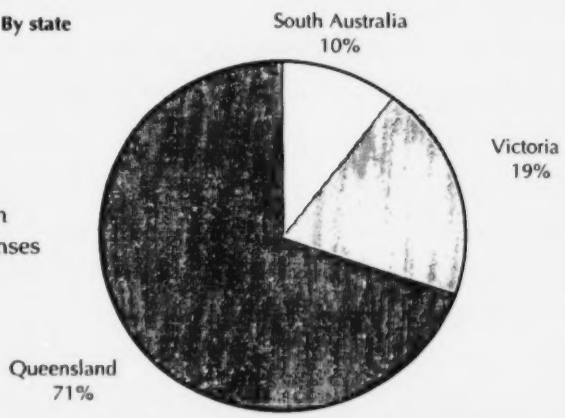
A sample of 50% of SBNAs was initially desired in each state. This was relatively straightforward in Victoria (with 415 questionnaires sent out to 50% of the database of 830) but in Queensland the numbers were so large that the budget precluded this size of sample. Of the 4159 SBNAs in Queensland, 1500 were therefore surveyed (36%). In South Australia, they were not flagged separately in the database from other school students undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships. Of these 830 school-attending apprentices and trainees, it was generally believed by South Australian officials that a little less than half (around 400) were school-based. Fifty per cent of those on the database were surveyed, but responses were only requested from those who were school-based. Thus it was likely that, in South Australia, around 200 receiving surveys would have been eligible to complete them. In each state, the sample was obtained by an alphabetical split. The list of surnames was inspected to satisfy the researchers that the sample did not appear to provide an over- or under-representation of any particular ethnic group. Thus the sample can be assumed to be random.

After discussion with state training authorities and VET in schools personnel in the three states, it was decided to administer the survey via a questionnaire sent direct to the homes of the SBNAs. This was done through the apprentice and trainee database held by each state

training authority. A covering letter was sent, explaining clearly what an SBNA was and who was eligible to respond.

The response rate exceeded all expectations, especially considering the age of the respondents and the fact that final school exams were approaching for years 12 and 13 students (late September/early October 2001). Six hundred and forty-one responses were received in time to be processed, which constituted 27.5% of all the 2330 sent out, and a true response rate of around 30.3% based on the estimate of eligible South Australian students. For a mailed survey this is a good response rate. The response rate was similar across all three states, varying from 29.9% in Queensland to an estimated 33% in South Australia (figure 1 shows the distribution of the responses, by state). The questionnaires were exceptionally well completed, including the qualitative questions, and several students who were not eligible to respond wrote letters to express their regret at not being able to participate. The large and positive response and additional feedback suggest that there was a high level of interest among SBNAs in their program, and that the students were, prima facie, well disposed towards their apprenticeships and traineeships and anxious to discuss them. Phone calls to the researchers from schools and group training companies indicated that some students had taken their questionnaires to relevant adults for discussion.

Figure 1: Questionnaire responses received: By state



In terms of the total SBNA population in each state, the percentage of responses received were as follows:

- South Australia 16.8%
- Victoria 14.9%
- Queensland 10.8%

The South Australian figure is based on the estimate, as discussed above, that a little less than one-half of the school-attending apprentices and trainees on the state database were school-based new apprentices. The Queensland figure is lower than the other two states because the sample size was smaller (around 36% of the SBNA population as compared with 50% in Victoria and an estimated 50% in South Australia). Across the three states the proportion of SBNAs from whom completed questionnaires were received was 11.9% (assuming a population of 400 SBNAs in South Australia).

The questionnaire responses were entered into an Excel database and analysed using the SPSS data analysis program. Somewhat over half of the students (383 in all) also completed a form indicating their willingness to participate in a follow-up study, and their details were recorded. These students can be followed up at the same time as the 413 students from the previous project who completed a similar form. Such a study could examine the links between school students' engagement with workplaces and their subsequent employment and education experiences.

Limitations of the methodology

The research methodology used was limited by the small budget allocated to the research. The questionnaires returned could not necessarily be assumed to be representative of the entire population of SBNAs in the three states in the study. Since there has been no previous large-scale study of SBNAs nor any publicly available databases there are, in any case, few points of comparison. Thus the research approach allowed the researchers to suggest trends and make observations but the data cannot necessarily be taken to be definitive. The comparatively large response rate and the uniform distribution of responses across states, the gender distribution, and the industry area of respondents compared with information known about SBNAs, all increase the chance of the sample being representative. The study can be viewed as an indicative study giving a general profile of SBNAs.

Profile of the respondents

The profile of the 641 respondents to the questionnaire, taken from their responses to section 1 of the questionnaire, was as follows:

Profile of the 641 respondents to the questionnaire	
State	Queensland 70.2% (450 students); Victoria 19.3% (124 students); South Australia 10.5% (67 students)
Type of school	Public—74.6%; Independent—9.2%; Catholic—16.3%
Location of school	Capital city—22.9%; Regional city (pop more than 10 000)— 42.9%; Small town (pop 500–10 000)—32.5%; Remote area (pop less than 500 or outside town)—1.6%
School year	Year 9—1.3%; Year 10— 6.1%; Year 11— 45.9%; Year 12—45.4%; Year 13— 0.6%; Left school—0.6%
Age	16—41.6%; 17—45.2%; 18—9.1%; Other 4.2%
Gender	Male—44.4%; Female—55.3%
Ethnic background	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander—1.6% (10 students); NESB (English not the main language spoken at home)—1.7% (11 students); NESB parent (at least one parent born outside Australia in a non-English-speaking country)—10.1%
Disability	Physical—1.4%; Learning—3.0%
Socio-economic status (self-defined)	Above average—9.7%; About average—73.4%; Below average—16.9%
Academic ability (self-defined)	Above average—17.6%; About average—75.8%; Below average—6.7%
Planned school-leaving year	Year 10—0.8%; Year 11—2.8%; Year 12—90.4%; Year 13—1.1%; Unsure—4.9%
Planned post-school destination	University—22.2%; TAFE full-time—9.6%; Continue the current apprenticeship—13.7%; An (other) apprenticeship—6.8%; Continue the current traineeship—13.1%; An(other) traineeship—2.4%; Other work—15.5%; Not sure —14.8%; Other 1.4%

Based on the responses to the questionnaire, the figures appear to suggest some interesting characteristics of SBNAs:

- SBNAs are distributed across school sectors in line with the general school population.
- They are less likely than most Australians of the same age to live in a metropolitan area.
- They are more likely to be female than male.
- They are overwhelmingly Australian-born with Australian or English-speaking parents (this is in line with apprenticeships and traineeships more generally).
- The vast majority expect to complete year 12 (somewhat to be expected since 45% were already in year 12 and a further 45% in year 11).
- They are far less likely than the average school student to aspire to immediate university entrance.
- Compared with the sample of years 10, 11 and 12 students from the previous study (Smith & Green 2001) which used identical questions about academic ability and socio-economic

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status, they appear to be worse-off financially and less likely to have above-average academic ability. In the previous study 6.1% reported themselves as being from below average family finances, and 26.5% as having above average academic ability. The implication of this comparison is that SBNAs may be drawn from students with middle or lower academic ability and disproportionately from students with low socio-economic status.

The students' previous employment (before starting the SBNA) is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Previous employment history

Type of part-time job	No.	%
A previous job with the same employer	131	20.5
A formal job (not babysitting or paper delivery) with a different employer	265	41.3
Babysitting or paper delivery	75	11.7
No previous job	222	34.6

Note: The first three categories are not mutually exclusive.

Sixty-five per cent of these students had been employed before they started their SBNA and one-fifth had worked for the same employer previously in a different capacity. Their SBNAs were not, therefore, generally their first experience of formal working life.

Reasons for undertaking a school-based new apprenticeship

Students were given a list of reasons (with the added option of 'other') why they might have chosen to undertake a SBNA. They were asked to select three and then rank them. Over 95% of the responses fell within the given choices, with five per cent selecting 'other'. The most popular three categories for 'first most important reason' were as follows:

- Two-fifths of the students said that the most important reason was to get the qualification.
- Just over one-third said that getting specific experience in an industry was the most important reason.
- Just over six per cent of responses were 'to help get a part-time job while at university or other tertiary institution'.

Some of those who gave 'other' as a response wrote down their reasons.

Most important reason for undertaking the SBNA (selection of 'other' responses):

- Because you get paid to learn.
- Boost my TER scores.
- I already had the job, I just wanted to upgrade my status/position.
- I just thought it would be a really enjoyable and interesting job.
- I was working and wanted some study.
- It's the only thing I have for leaving school, (I'm) not interested in anything, it's a job with a certificate.
- It was something I can do passionately.
- It was the best option for me to become a chef.
- I knew it was what I want to do in the future and it gave me a good head start.
- My boss told me to do it.

A weighted index was prepared (table 3) to take into account first, second and third choices. This table confirms that the major reasons were 'wanting the qualification' and 'getting specific experience' in an industry. The weighted index showed, in addition, that other reasons such as practical skills and general working experience weighed quite heavily as subsidiary decision-making factors.

Table 3: Most important reasons for getting school-based apprenticeships: Weighted index

Reason for getting school-based apprenticeship	Index
I wanted the qualification	2.0
I wanted specific experience in an industry	1.5
I liked the idea of gaining practical skills	0.9
I wanted general experience of work	0.8
To help get a part-time job when I go to university	0.6
I wanted extra spending money	0.5
I'd prefer it to doing academic subjects at school	0.3
Other	0.2
Done a VET course and wanted to build on it	0.1
I or my family needed the money for living expenses/s	0.1
My parents told me to do it	0.1

The students' first-most-important reasons for doing an SBNA were analysed by a number of variables.

Self-defined socio-economic status:

- As might be expected most of those undertaking the SBNA for living expenses were from a below-average socio-economic status.
- General experience of work was higher among higher socio-economic status than other groups.
- Specific experience in an industry was higher among medium and low socio-economic status.
- Practical skills and 'prefer to academic subjects' were lower among high socio-economic status.
- 'To get a part-time job at university' was higher among high socio-economic status.

Self-defined academic ability:

- 'Wanting the qualification' was highest among the less academic students.
- Practical skills and 'prefer to academic subjects' were higher among less academic students.

By gender:

- Females were slightly higher on general experience of work and overwhelmingly higher on 'to help get a part-time job at uni'; 39 females but only two males selected the latter option.
- Males were higher on preferring an SBNA to academic subjects and wanting specific experience in an industry.

By location:

- Capital city students were more likely than others to cite extra spending money or general experience of work as the main reason.

- Small town students were more likely to cite specific experience in an industry and gaining practical skills.
- Regional city students were keenest on the qualification.

By school type:

- Catholic school students (and to a lesser extent independent school students) were more likely to cite the qualification as the most important reason.
- Government school students were more likely than others to cite specific experience in an industry.

By previous employment:

- Those who had worked previously were more likely to cite the qualification as the main attraction than those who had not had jobs before.
- Those who had not worked before were more likely to get a SBNA to gain specific industry experience.

Students' intended destination after school seemed to have a major effect upon their reasons for undertaking a SBNA. Table 4 shows the reasons for doing an SBNA for the students categorised by intended post-school destination.

This table shows that different groups of students had quite different reasons for undertaking their SBNA. Those destined for a vocational education qualification (TAFE course or another apprenticeship or traineeship) were more likely than others to value the qualification that the SBNA would give them. Those heading for university were more likely to value the assistance their SBNA would give them in getting a part-time job, or the extra spending money. Interestingly those who expected to continue in their traineeship valued above all the specific experience in an industry, suggesting that these students had already made their career choices, at least in the medium term.

Table 4: Reason for undertaking an SBNA: By intended post-school destination

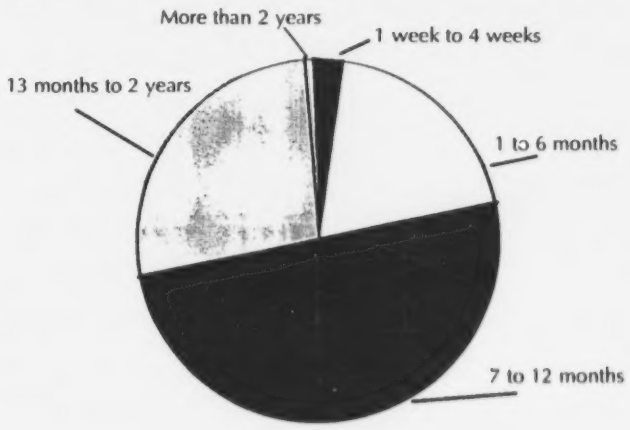
	University course (full time)	TAFE course (full time)	Continue SBNA apprenticeship	Another apprenticeship	Continue SBNA traineeship	Another traineeship	Other full or part time work	Not sure	Other	Total	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	No.	%
I wanted the qualification	34.8	50.8	45.3	53.5	40.7	53.3	35.4	32.3	50.0	252	40.3
Done a VET course & wanted to build on it	–	–	2.3	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.3
I/my family needed the money for living expense(s)	1.4	1.6	–	–	1.2	–	2.1	2.2	–	8	1.3
I wanted extra spending money	7.8	3.3	2.3	–	2.5	–	2.1	3.2	–	22	3.5
I wanted general experience of work	11.3	6.6	–	2.3	3.7	6.7	10.4	10.8	–	45	7.2
I wanted specific experience in an industry	16.3	16.4	37.2	32.6	43.2	20.0	28.1	26.9	20.0	171	27.3
I'd prefer it to doing academic subjects at school	1.4	1.6	4.7	7.0	2.5	–	4.2	6.5	10.0	23	3.7
I liked the idea of gaining practical skills	2.1	6.6	3.5	–	2.5	6.7	8.3	8.6	–	29	4.6
To help get a part-time job at uni/other course	19.1	9.8	–	2.3	1.2	–	4.2	1.1	10.0	41	6.5
My parents told me to do it	0.7	–	–	–	–	–	3.1	2.2	–	6	1.0
Other	5.0	3.3	4.7	2.3	2.5	13.3	2.1	6.5	10.0	27	4.3
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**626**	**100.0**

Nature of the school-based new apprenticeship

The majority of the SBNAs were trainees rather than apprentices. A total of 77.7% said that they were in a traineeship, compared with only 14.4% who said they were apprentices. Another 8.1% were not sure[8]. Considering that most official advertising and documentation, especially Commonwealth literature, tends to combine apprenticeships and traineeships under the banner 'New Apprenticeships' it is perhaps more surprising that the vast majority clearly identified as being either an apprentice or a trainee than that 8% were not sure which they were. By Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level, 84.2% were undertaking a Certificate II qualification, 15.3% a Certificate III, and 0.5% (only three students) a Certificate IV course. This confirms the findings about the apprenticeship/traineeship split, since generally traineeships are at Certificate II level while apprenticeships are at Certificate III, although there can be variations. Sixteen per cent of the respondents expected, on commencement, to complete their SBNA within 12 months; 67 per cent between 13 months and two years, and 16.1% in more than two years.

Just over three-quarters (77.7%) had started their SBNA in year 11 of school; 11.8% had begun during year 10, and 10.5% during year 12. Those who began during year 12 would presumably not be able to complete their contract of training before they finished school. This is not necessarily a problem as students can continue after leaving school if their study and work pathways permit. The majority of respondents had been working as SBNAs for some time (figure 2). Thus their responses to learning and training questions can be regarded as well-informed.

Figure 2: Length of time working as SBNA



Not all of the students were still working as SBNAs. 10.8% had left, although they were still recorded on their state training authority databases. Half of these had actually completed the apprenticeship or traineeship, and three others had left school. The reasons for leaving given by the others (28) were as follows (table 5).

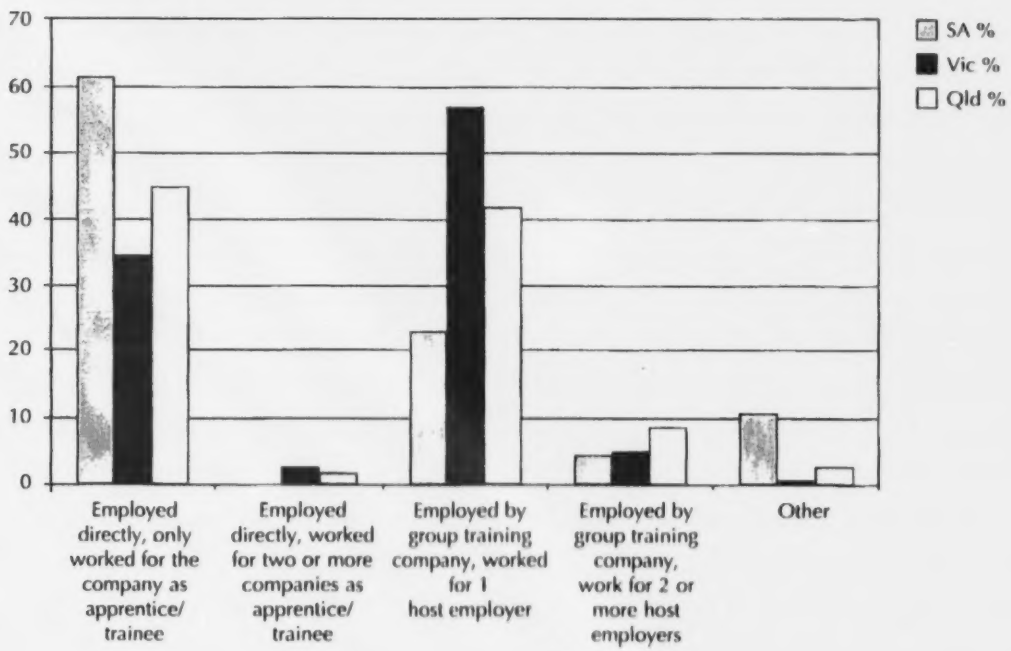
Table 5: Reason for non-completion of SBNA: Students who were still at school

Reason for leaving (leavers who had not completed school and/or SBNA)	No.	%
Decided I did not like the occupation	1	3.6
Did not like the job for some other reason	6	21.4
Was dismissed from the job	6	21.4
The job ended for some other reason	7	25.0
It was too hard to fit the job in with school work	5	17.9
Other	3	10.7
Total	**28**	**100.0**

Table 5 shows that only 20 students either lost their jobs or left because they did not like the jobs. However it could be that some students remained in jobs they did not like in order not to forego the qualification; one student's comments about being 'trapped' may be illustrative of this situation.

Students were asked how they were employed: whether they were employed directly by an organisation or whether they were employed by a group training company[9]. To examine the stability of employment they were asked to indicate whether they had worked for one, or more than one employer (or host employer in the case of group training companies). Almost exactly half of the respondents (50.1%) were employed by group training companies. As might be expected, those working for group training companies were more likely to have changed employers (7.5% of the total who worked for group training companies had worked for more than one employer whereas only 1.8% of the directly-employed had changed jobs). There were quite a number of 'other' responses. Substantial categories included in these included SBNAs working for their parents, those working for schools[10], and some students who did not appear to understand the question, including a few who did not seem to regard themselves as employees. Figure 3 shows responses by state.

Figure 3: Mode of employment: By state



South Australian SBNAs were most likely to be directly employed, while the state with the highest proportion employed by group training companies was Victoria. Further analysis showed that apprentices were more likely to be employed directly by a company than trainees (54% of apprentices compared with 45% of trainees were directly employed).

The findings were analysed by reasons for undertaking the SBNA. There were two major points of interest. Those who had taken the SBNA to help them get a part-time job at university were much more likely than average to be employed directly by an employer. (Three-quarters of these SBNAs were working in retail and fast food, much higher than the 50% of the SBNAs as a whole.) Those who were doing an SBNA mainly to get specific experience in an industry were much more likely to be working for a group training company and in particular to have worked for more than one host employer.

More than half of the students had learned about the SBNA through school, either through a teacher or co-ordinator (58%) or from a notice board at school (6.7%) (table 6). A group of 13.7% already worked for the employer. There appeared to be some differences among the SBNAs employed in the different modes:

- Those working for group training companies were much more likely than the average to have found out about the SBNA through school.
- Those working directly for only one employer were more likely than the average to have worked for the employer already or to have heard about the job through a family member.

These findings suggest that group training companies may provide a way into SBNAs for those students who do not have access to existing employment or contacts in workplaces. Also it is likely that it reflects pro-active marketing by group training companies in schools.

Table 6: How students found out about the SBNA: By mode of employment

	Employed directly, only worked for 1 company as SBNA		Employed directly, worked for 2 or more companies as SBNA		Employed by group training company, worked for 1 host employer		Employed by group training company, worked for 2 or more host employer		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Through teacher/ co-ordinator at my school	122	45.0	6	54.5	180	68.4	34	73.9	13	61.9	355	58.0
Advertised on a school notice board	17	6.3	–	–	20	7.6	3	6.5	1	4.8	41	6.7
Through work placement co-ordinator	8	3.0	1	9.1	17	6.5	2	4.3	–	–	28	4.6
Family member told me about it	18	6.6	1	9.1	8	3.0	1	2.2	1	4.8	29	4.7
A friend told me about it	13	4.8	3	27.3	14	5.3	1	2.2	1	4.8	32	5.2
I already worked for the employer	67	24.7	–	—	11	4.2	3	6.5	3	14.3	84	13.7
I did work experience there	15	5.5	–	–	7	2.7	–	—	2	9.5	24	3.9
I did a vocational placement there	3	1.1	–	–	2	0.8	–	–	–	–	5	0.8
Other	8	3.0	–	–	4	1.5	2	4.3	–	–	14	2.3
Total	**271**	**100.0**	**11**	**100.0**	**263**	**100.0**	**46**	**100.0**	**21**	**100.0**	**612**	**100.0**

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The findings indicate that vocational placements (associated with VET courses) do not constitute a route into SBNAs although work experience may. This finding may simply be due to the fact that work experience may take place in year 10 while VET courses (involving placements) are most common in years 11 and 12, the same years which are most common for SBNAs.

Respondents were also asked in what industry area they were employed (table 7). Adapted ANZSIC codes were used for this classification and two new categories (office/business and automotive) were added during data analysis to capture significant groups of 'other' responses not covered by the categories used in the question.

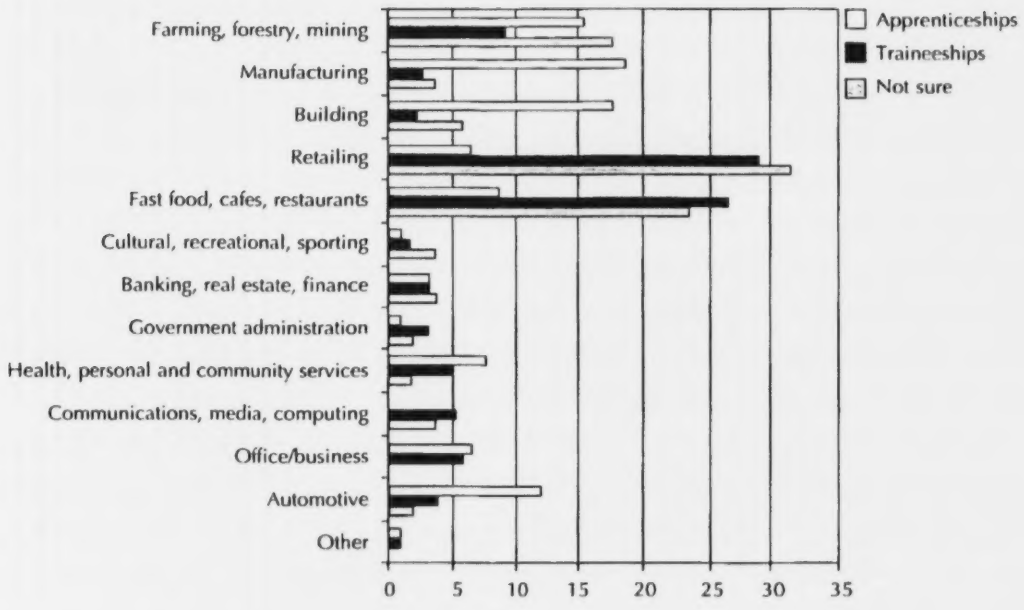
Table 7: Distribution of SBNAs: By industry area

	Total	
	Count	%
Farming, forestry, mining	69	10.9
Manufacturing	33	5.2
Building	31	4.9
Retailing	165	26.1
Fast food, cafes, restaurants	151	23.9
Cultural, recreational, sporting	12	1.9
Banking/real estate/finance	21	3.3
Government administration	18	2.8
Health, personal and community services	32	5.1
Communications, media, computing	28	4.4
Office/business	35	5.5
Automotive	32	5.1
Other	6	0.9
Total	**633**	**100.0**

There was a strong concentration of SBNAs in fast food and retail, in line with, although not quite so pronounced as, the distribution of ordinary student part-time work; exactly half of SBNAs were in fast food, cafes and restaurants and retailing, compared with 62.9% of ordinary student workers (Smith & Green 2001). Further analysis showed some variations by state. Victorian SBNAs were somewhat higher in farming/forestry/mining and much lower in building than the respondents as a whole. South Australia showed a quite different pattern. SBNAs in that state were concentrated almost exclusively in three industry areas: retailing, fast food/cafes/restaurants and farming/forestry/mining.

Figure 4 shows the distribution by nature of contract of training (apprenticeship, traineeship, or 'not sure'). As might be expected, apprenticeships were mainly in traditional industry areas such as manufacturing, automotive and building. Traineeships were more prevalent in 'newer' service industry areas such as retail and fast food/cafes/restaurants. It is also interesting to note that students in some industry areas were more likely than those in others to be unsure about whether their contract was an apprenticeship or a traineeship.

Figure 4: Distribution of SBNAs across industry areas: By nature of contract of training



There was considerable gender differentiation in the industry of employment. Females were twice as likely as males to be employed in retailing and 30% more likely to be in fast food/cafes/restaurants. Almost all of those in manufacturing, building and farming/forestry/mining were boys while almost all of those in health/personal and community services, in banking/finance and in government administration were girls.

The working environment

The average number of hours worked per week was 10.5[11]. This is not much higher than the average number of hours for all part-time student jobs of 8.5 hours a week (Smith & Green 2001, p.10[12]). While the respondents were asked to give the average number of hours a week, it is possible, however, that some of those working longer hours in school holidays did not include these longer hours in their average figure. Thus the actual average hours may have been somewhat longer. However, further analysis indicated that a little over half of those working less than 7.5 hours per week were not working extra hours during the school holidays.

The most common pattern of working was a set number of hours each week on school days; 55% of the SBNAs were working in this manner. Thirty-five per cent worked for a set number of hours per week including weekends. Fifty-seven per cent of the SBNAs also worked for extra hours in the school holidays. Inspection of 'other' responses suggested that quite a number of students did not have regular hours of work, instead working as casuals or attending for extra hours when their employers asked, for example to cover busy periods or sick leave. Some students said that they attended on days which their schools set aside for non-curricular activities or that their employer allowed them to work when it suited them.

The average number of hours was divided into a number of categories and analysed by whether the SBNA was an apprentice or a trainee (table 8).

Table 8: Average number of hours worked per week: By nature of contract of training

No of hours per week	2–4.5	5–7.5	8–10.5	11–13.5	14–16.5	17–19.5	20–30
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Apprentice	3.5	5.9	44.7	9.4	22.4	8.2	5.9
Trainee	7.7	19.9	36.2	12.6	15.5	2.9	5.3
Not sure	2.3	18.2	31.8	27.3	9.1	–	11.4
Total	**6.7**	**17.7**	**37.1**	**13.2**	**16.0**	**3.4**	**5.8**

Three-quarters of the SBNAs were working less than 14 hours, yet around 15 hours[13] is generally considered to be the optimum working week for SBNAs (Andrews et al. 2000; DETE 2000). One-quarter were working for less than eight hours a week. Apprentices were working longer hours than trainees, with 36.5% working 14 hours or more per week compared with 23.7% of trainees.

The SBNAs overwhelmingly enjoyed their work; 67.3% said they enjoyed their job 'a lot'; 25.5% 'some'; with only 5.2% saying 'a bit', and 1.9% not at all. This compares very favourably with normal part-time student work. Smith and Green (2001) found that only 45.5% of students in ordinary part-time work enjoyed their work a lot and 44.4% a bit, with 10.1% not enjoying their jobs at all. (The option 'some' was not given in that study.)

Enjoyment of the job varied across industry areas. Those working in retail were the least satisfied with their jobs. Only 51.5% of these SBNAs enjoyed their jobs 'a lot' compared with the average of 67.3%. Communications/media/computing, manufacturing and fast food/cafes/restaurants were also slightly below average. The industry areas where SBNAs were most satisfied were cultural/recreational/sporting (100% enjoyed their jobs 'a lot') and building (87.1%). Automotive, health/personal/community services and office/business were also above average.

Compared with ordinary part-time work, SBNAs were much more likely to be working with adults rather than other schoolchildren. Table 9 compares the results for SBNAs with the findings for school student jobs from the previous study (Smith & Green 2001).

Table 9: Amount of time spent working with adults and other teenagers: SBNAs and ordinary student/workers

Age of fellow workers	SBNAs	Ordinary student/workers
	%	%
Spent most time working with adults	63.4	39.5
Spent most time working with teenagers	9.7	27.1
Worked equally with adults and teenagers	26.7	33.4

By industry area, the following results were found:

- Most likely to work with adults: Banking/finance; automotive.
- Most likely to work with teenagers: Fast food/cafes; retail.
- Most likely to work with people of mixed ages: Cultural/recreational/sporting.

Retail stood out in the predominance of teenage employees. Only two-fifths of SBNAs in retail worked mainly with adults.

The SBNAs appeared to have a reasonable amount of responsibility in their jobs. Two fifths of them said they had 'a lot' of responsibility and almost half 'some' responsibility. For normal

student jobs the figures (Smith & Green 2001, p.51) were 'a lot' 54.2%, and 'a bit' 42.3% (the option 'some' was not given). When analysed by industry area, it was evident that the traditional apprentice areas (manufacturing, building and automotive) were less likely than the average to offer the chance for a lot of responsibility. In addition, banking/real estate/finance and office/business SBNAs had less responsibility than the average. The most responsibility attached to SBNAs in cultural/recreational/sporting and health/personal/community services.

Table 10 analyses the results for 'responsibility' by the age of fellow workers. It seemed that those working mainly with adults were given somewhat less responsibility than others, while those working in a mixed workforce had somewhat more responsibility than those working mainly with other teenagers.

Table 10: How much responsibility in the job: By age of fellow workers

Amount of responsibility	Fellow workers mostly adults		Fellow workers mostly teenage		Fellow workers equally adult & teenage		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A lot	148	36.9	26	42.6	80	47.1	254	40.2
Some	194	48.4	28	45.9	71	41.8	293	46.4
A bit	53	13.2	6	9.8	18	10.6	77	12.2
None	6	1.5	1	1.6	1	0.6	8	1.3
Total	**401**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**	**170**	**100.0**	**632**	**100.0**

Interest of a supervisor

The SBNAs were asked how often they discussed their progress at work with their boss or supervisor. Only 21% said they discussed their progress 'often', with 33% each answering 'sometimes' or 'occasionally'. Twelve per cent said they never discussed their progress. Those working for a group training company were found to be less likely to discuss their progress at work often with their workplace supervisor than those working directly for an employer.

Those working mainly with adults were more likely to have a supervisor who was interested in their progress (table 11). However even among these SBNAs, 40% discussed their progress only occasionally or not at all.

Table 11: Do you discuss your progress at work with your boss or supervisor? By age of fellow workers

	Often		Sometimes		Occasionally		Never		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Spent most time working with adults	95	23.6	144	35.7	131	32.5	33	8.2	403	100.0
Spent most time working with teenagers	9	14.5	20	32.3	18	29.0	15	24.2	62	100.0
Worked equally with adults and teenagers	32	19.0	49	29.2	61	36.3	26	15.5	168	100.0
Total	**136**	**21.5**	**213**	**33.6**	**210**	**33.2**	**74**	**11.7**	**633**	**100.0**

General comments about the job

The respondents were given the chance to make general comments about their apprenticeship or traineeship. Two hundred and nineteen took this opportunity, and their answers were coded as follows (table 12).

Table 12: General comments about SBNA

Type of comment	No.	%
Increased opportunities	43	19.6
Gained knowledge of workplace and workplace expectations	32	14.6
Other	28	12.8
Enjoyed traineeship/apprenticeship generally	25	11.4
Clarified future career/studies	24	11.4
Enjoyed workplace/job	21	9.6
Struggled to balance work and school	16	7.3
Work not interesting	15	6.8
Still unsure of future direction	14	6.4
Total	**219**	**100.0**

It is evident that the most important comment that these students wished to make was about the doors which their SBNA had opened for them. Nearly one third made comments concerning increased opportunity or the help the SBNA had given them in clarifying future career paths. Some of the individual comments, both positive and negative, are listed overleaf.

General comments about SBNA: Selection of responses

Positive

After doing retail management I decided to study business management at university.

Being able to complete my first year apprenticeship while in years 11 and 12 is good because I can still have a school life, and then after school finish my apprenticeship quicker.

By having this traineeship I may be more employable after the two years. That is really my reason for doing a traineeship.

Choosing a career can take a lot of thinking and preparation, so by doing a traineeship you get hands-on experience to help you decide.

Enjoyed it but realised it's not for me.

Excellent idea. Gets us to do some work, get some money and get a qualification.

Gives you a head start in your career.

I already worked at the store; my teacher told me I could turn it into an apprenticeship.

I also took on the traineeship as a back up in case I couldn't go to university.

I am applying for Camp America and you need experience with children, and that's what I got out of this traineeship.

I am doing Business Administration Certificate III and Certificate I fully understand and enjoy the work I have covered so far. Hands on experience is very helpful.

I am very confused about what I want to do after I leave school. I really enjoy my traineeship. If I didn't like it I would leave as it is affecting my school work.

I did the traineeship because it was offered and convenient, not as a career move.

I decided to attend this career since year 8 because I like to work with wood.

I enjoy the rush and bustle of a commercial kitchen. Hard work but exciting, creative too.

I get Mondays off school so I chose a traineeship to fill in the time.

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General comments about SBNA: Selection of responses (cont.)

Positive

I have found that I prefer work to school. It's more rewarding and not a waste of time.

I liked doing my traineeship but hated the TAFE side, it didn't interest me. Maybe all the theory side should be done in the workplace.

I love working there. I love going to work.

I think school-based apprenticeships are one of the best things going as they give you a head start in a career and you are still able to complete school.

This was a good opportunity to take so that I have a trade while I am still at school.

I wanted a job that was not at a grocery store or fast food and this was offered.

I work at [company name–cafe] and I am doing a Hospitality course. It is done through work. I am doing it for the extra marks on my entry score.

I would like to become a departmental manager as soon as possible because I really enjoy my workplace and others look up to me and listen to me.

My dad is a carpenter and I will take over the business.

My traineeship has helped me gain valuable experience in the hospitality industry which I need later on to become a flight attendant.

School-based traineeships are great as they show you what the job is really like.

When I started this traineeship it was all because of money. But it has opened up my eyes to this type of work and has given me something to focus on.

Negative

Group Training Companies are badly organised.

I'd rather be doing other stuff besides standing at the checkouts all day getting a sore back.

I'm only here for the money and I would never do this as a career. NO WAY—how boring.

I did not enjoy working at [company name–fast food outlet] as my (female) boss there treated me like a second class citizen by taking anger out on me and calling me names.

I thought it would be fun and open up new possibilities for me but I am just trapped in something I don't like.

The apprenticeships/traineeships are very hard for more academic students like myself as the system does not put school first on priority.

A few students took this opportunity to make negative comments about their training providers, including: course materials were sent late; the registered training organisation was disorganised; there were insufficient trainers; and a teacher left mid-year. Also a small number complained that there was too much homework, although another commented that the homework was too easy. Further discussion of off-the-job training can be found later in this report.

A specific question about the role of the SBNA in clarifying career choice gained the response that almost half of the SBNAs (48.2%) said that undertaking the SBNA had confirmed for them that they wished to undertake a career in that area. A total of 7.2% said that it had definitely decided them against a career in the area. About a quarter (25.2%) were still undecided about their career path and 12.1% said that the SBNA was not meant to be a career choice.

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Links with school

Although some students, as reported above, mentioned problems fitting in their SBNA with their school work, over half of the respondents (54%) said that it was not hard to fit in their jobs with their school work. Nearly two-fifths (38.9%) found it 'quite hard' but only 6.3% found it 'very hard'. In comparison with the large numbers of students in ordinary part-time jobs in the previous study (Smith & Green 2001), the SBNAs in the current study were more likely than the average part-time student worker to experience some difficulty in fitting the job in, but less likely to find it 'very hard' (the previous study found that 9.2% of all student workers found it 'very hard' to fit the job in). Those who worked extra hours in the school holidays found slightly less difficulty but the difference was negligible.

Students who worked between five and 10.5 hours a week found it easiest to fit in their school work as well as their job. Interestingly the small number of students who worked less than five hours a week seemed to find more difficulty than most fitting everything in. As with the original study's findings about ordinary paid work (Smith & Green 2001), those working longer hours were not as daunted as might be expected by the number of hours they worked. Sixty per cent of those working between 17 and 19.5 hours a week said it was not hard to fit everything in, while of those working over 20 hours a week, a surprisingly high 42.9% said it was not hard and only 5.7% found it very hard.

While the amount of paid work undertaken did not seem to create major problems, there were some problems with timetabling their school lessons around their jobs (table 13).

Table 13: Has your SBNA caused problems with timetabling other school subjects?

	Frequency	Per cent
Yes, but the school sorted out the problem	129	20.9
Yes, and I had to sort them out myself	141	22.9
No	346	56.2
Total	**616**	**100.0**

Almost half of the students reported some problems, and of these over half had to sort the problems out themselves. Clearly this was an issue of some importance, as 87 students chose to make extra comments. The more negative comments included:

- Yes I miss six periods on the day I work; it's up to me to get the work off teachers so I can catch up.
- I quit one of my subjects.
- I did the traineeship after school hours.
- Our exams and block release fell during the same week, so the exams had to be done out of school hours, which was not very convenient.
- School has not helped me at all, they stuffed up my South Australian Certificate of Education.

- The teacher teaches the students in classes when I'm at either traineeship or TAFE when they have been told not to by the principal.
- School didn't care.

Comments illustrating a proactive approach from the school included:

- The school and VET parent-teacher association co-ordinator made sure there would be no problems by giving Fridays to parent-teacher association and VET students to do their placements [sic].
- School has a four-day week for all students to attend training.

In other cases the student made a suggestion and had to secure agreement:

- I came up with a solution and they agreed.
- I suggested, the school acted.

Some students were performing miracles of organisation, for example:

- I have extra responsibility as school captain as well.
- I've had to rearrange my timetable and also teach myself some subjects as the subjects that I need to do are on different (timetable) lines.
- Managing a schedule helped my time management.
- Simply had to accept being strained for time.

When analysed by state there were some differences. Victorian students were slightly more likely to experience no difficulties in timetabling. South Australian students experienced more difficulties and were more likely to have to sort the problems out themselves (31.8% fell into this category).

There was a reasonable amount of feedback from jobs to school life and peers. Table 14 shows how often the students discussed their SBNA in class at school, and with friends.

Table 14: How often do you discuss the apprentice/traineeship in class, and with friends?

	In class		With friends	
	No.	%	No.	%
Often	67	11.3	161	25.8
Occasionally	303	51.3	361	58.0
Never	220	37.2	100	16.0
Total	**590**	**100.0**	**622**	**100.0**

These results suggest a much greater integration of SBNAs with school life and peer interaction than ordinary student part-time work. The previous study (Smith & Green 2001, p.69) showed that students' ordinary part-time jobs were very rarely discussed in class (68.8% said that they were never discussed), and that over a quarter of students (26.6%) never discussed their jobs with their friends, with only 5.8% discussing their jobs 'often' with friends. There were some differences between states. The Victorian students were least likely to talk about their SBNAs in class and the South Australian students were most likely. South Australian students were also most likely to talk to their friends 'often' (28.1%) about their SBNA, although Queensland students had the lowest rate for 'never' talking about their SBNA to friends.

Students were asked whether their off- or on-the-job training helped at all with their other school work. Table 15 shows the results by state.

Table 15: How much SBNA helps with other school work

	A lot	Some	A bit	Not at all	Total
Queensland	63	161	112	105	441
	14.3%	36.5%	25.4%	23.8%	100.0%
Victoria	11	38	39	36	124
	8.9%	30.6%	31.5%	29.0%	100.0%
South Australia	6	17	19	25	67
	9.0%	25.4%	28.4%	37.3%	100.0%
Total	**80**	**216**	**170**	**166**	**632**
	12.7%	**34.2%**	**26.9%**	**26.3%**	**100.0%**

The somewhat more favourable results for Queensland students might reflect the fact that SBNAs are more firmly established in that state. Overall the results were far more favourable than for ordinary part-time work (Smith & Green 2001, p.70). In that study, for ordinary part-time work, only six per cent of students said that their jobs helped them a lot at school, and 52% said they did not help at all.

There were nearly 150 qualitative comments on this question. Many students simply noted the subjects in which their workplace experiences helped them at school. These included: accounting, information technology, horticulture, business management, English, hospitality, retailing, industry studies and marine biology. Others commented on the transfer of more generic skills. Such comments included:

- Being able to work as a team and communicate.
- Because I have time management skills.
- Concentration and respect.
- Diligence to complete what I commence.
- I can relate everything to something at work.
- Improves self-confidence.
- When people talk about companies, entitlements.

Some students, however, stated that there was no connection between their SBNA and their school work; while a few commented that all the SBNA did was take time away from school work. Two students noted that their workplace experiences gained them recognition of prior learning in school courses.

Learning and training

On-the-job training

Three-quarters of the SBNAs had a formal induction at work when they began their jobs. The average (mean) length of induction for those SBNAs was 3.7 hours, although the distribution was highly skewed. The mode (most common response) was one hour and the median (mid-point of the data) was two hours. The longest induction reported was 40 hours. Generally these findings indicate that inductions were quite cursory.

Respondents were asked to choose from a list of ways of learning at work, and to rank the three most important for them in their SBNA. Almost half (48.9%) of the SBNAs reported that the most important way in which they learned at work was through being shown by a trainer or supervisor. Just under one-fifth (19.6%) said they learned most from being shown by fellow workers. 'Watching others' was the most important method for just over one-tenth (10.1%). Forty-four respondents (7%) said that 'trial and error' was their main learning method.

A weighted index (calculated in a similar manner to table 2) was able to take account of second and third choices. In this index (table 16), 'asking questions of a supervisor' shows itself as being as important as 'watching others'.

Table 16: Most important ways of learning at work: Weighted index

Method of learning	Index
Being shown by a trainer or supervisor	1.8
Being shown by fellow worker(s)	1.1
Asking questions of a supervisor	0.8
Watching others	0.8
Asking questions of a fellow worker	0.6
Trial and error	0.5
Doing an off-the-job course (separate from normal off-the-job training)	0.2
Reading company manuals	0.2
Other	0.0

The results from the previous project (Smith & Green 2001) compared weighted indices for work experience, paid work (which included a very small number of SBNAs) and vocational placements. Compared with the results for all three types of workplace engagement, reported in that study, the most important finding is that SBNAs need to rely less on watching others. In other words they appear to be more likely to be trained formally. In particular, the figure for 'first most important learning method', shows a difference. 'Being shown by a trainer or supervisor' was important for these SBNAs. The 48.9% who said it was their first most important method of learning was well ahead of the previous project's figures of 41.8% for paid workers, 44.9% for placement students and 35.9% for work experience students (Smith & Green 2001, p.66).

How well trained they felt

Some forms of learning were clearly more effective than others. Table 17 shows that those whose first-most-important way of learning at work was doing an off-the-job course (separate from the normal, contracted, off-the-job training) were most likely to feel clear about how to do their tasks[14]. Asking questions of a supervisor, asking questions of a fellow worker and being shown by a trainer or supervisor were also more effective than the other methods. Trial and error, not surprisingly, was the least effective.

Table 17: How well trained SBNAs felt: By first-most-important way of learning at work

	I always feel clear about how to carry out tasks		Sometimes I am unclear about how to carry out tasks		I am usually unclear how to carry out tasks		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Watching others	36	57.1	27	42.9	–	–	63	100.0
Being shown by a trainer or supervisor	186	61.2	116	38.2	2	0.7	304	100.0
Being shown by fellow workers	67	55.4	52	43.0	2	1.7	121	100.0
Reading company manuals	4	57.1	3	42.9	–	–	7	100.0
Doing an off job course	10	76.9	3	23.1	–	–	13	100.0
Asking questions of a supervisor	23	65.7	11	31.4	1	2.9	35	100.0
Asking questions of a fellow worker	16	61.5	9	34.6	1	3.8	26	100.0
Trial and error	19	43.2	21	47.7	4	9.1	44	100.0
Other	3	75.0	1	25.0	–	–	4	100.0
Total	**364**	**59.0**	**243**	**39.4**	**10**	**1.6**	**617**	**100.0**

The previous report (Smith & Green 2001) noted that other factors may affect how clear school students in workplaces felt about how to do workplace tasks. These were noted to include the natural ability of the student and the relative complexity of the task. In the current study there was, not surprisingly, a link between length of time employed and how clear the SBNA was about doing tasks; of those working for more than a year, 65% were always clear about how to do their work. Analysis of the reason for undertaking the SBNA also revealed the following:

- Those who undertook the SBNA primarily to help get a part-time job at university were the most likely to feel clear about their workplace tasks (76.9% always felt clear).
- Those seeking more general experience of work were the least likely of the large categories of students to feel clear (46.7% of these students always felt clear).
- Those doing the SBNA for living expenses or for spending money were also more likely to say they did not feel well trained, but the numbers in these cases were too low to draw conclusions.
- Those who did the SBNA to gain practical skills were less likely than the average to feel clear (48.3% always felt clear) about their tasks but those who preferred an SBNA to more academic subjects were more likely to feel clear (63.6% always felt clear); this is a seeming contradiction.

Analysis by industry area gave the following results (table 18):

Table 18: Quality of training: Best and worst industry areas

Best trained (felt clear about how to do job)	Worst trained (did not feel clear about how to do job)
Cultural, recreational, sporting	Government admin.
Farming, forestry, mining	Automotive
Fast food, cafes, restaurants	Retailing
Health, personal & community service	

There was a clear link between the interest of a supervisor and how well trained the SBNAs felt. Of those who discussed their progress at work often with their supervisor, over 68% said they always felt clear about how to do their job, whereas only 43% of those who never discussed their progress felt clear about how to do their job. Moreover, those who were employed directly by a company felt somewhat better trained (63% always felt clear about their work) than those who were employed by a group training company, especially those who worked for two or more host employers (53% of these always felt clear).

Specific skills

The SBNAs were asked to write down an important specific skill which was needed in the job. These were coded as follows (table 19):

Table 19: Important specific skills needed in the SBNAs jobs

Main specific skills	No.	%
Operating machinery/equipment	121	21.0
Handling tools/raw materials	113	19.7
Communication with other workers	107	18.6
Customer service	50	8.7
Computer operation	42	7.3
Cognitive skills	29	5.0
Organising work	27	4.7
Handling people (elderly, children)	22	3.8
Administration	21	3.7
Handling animals	19	3.3
Other	19	3.3
No skills	5	0.9

The skills mentioned were diverse and wide-ranging, and the above table does not capture the full flavour of the responses. The following selection gives a fuller picture of the work performed and the breadth and depth of skills being learned by the SBNAs. Some of these skills are very specific and others are quite general.

Important specific skill used in the job: Selection of responses

A good knowledge of plants	Like the bush
Accurate measuring	Making burgers
Be good with timber	MYOB program
Being able to handle grumpy clients at all times	Not be afraid to ask questions
Being neat and accurate	Operate a cash register
Calibrate boom spray	Operate a bobcat and tractor
Chairside dental assisting	Organising, set up and serve coach's meals
Chopping veg and fruit	Packing meat and cutting off the bone
Common sense on the sea	Personal hygiene of the elderly
Confidence around large animals	Pizza oven
Coxswain's licence	Public speaking
Dairy skills, milking calf	Riding horses
Doing an oil change	Safely operating agricultural machinery
Filing, photocopying	Shampooing clients' hair
Good hairdressing skills	Sorting and identifying prawns
Hanging doors	Talking on the phone to customers
Having five things to do at once	To dress and shower people
How the computer program Galileo works	Touch typing
How to operate a lathe	Tree felling, tree climbing, chainsaw licence
Humility	Using a broom
Hygiene	Using a library computer system
Interest in people and wanting to help others	Using EFTPOS machine
Knocking up a kitchen cupboard	Welding
Lapping valves in engine head	Wiring up power point, switches, lights
Levelling up ground for lawns	You need to enjoy your work and I don't really

Some of these skills are very specific and others are quite general. When asked how well they had learned the skill, 54% said 'very well', 31% 'quite well' and 5% 'a bit'. Ten per cent said they knew how to do it already. Those doing an apprenticeship were less likely to have learned the skill 'very well' then those in traineeships. This is in line with other research on apprenticeships and traineeships which shows that apprentices learn skills at a slower rate than trainees (Smith 2000). Smith (2000) attributes this finding to the fact that apprentices know they have a longer period of time to learn than trainees do, and that employers tend to introduce skills gently and progressively to apprentices.

Generic skills development

A list of seven generic skills was given to students and they were asked how much they had developed them in their jobs. They were given a choice of 'a lot', 'some', 'a bit' and 'not at all'. The list was loosely based on the Mayer key competencies (AEC/MOVEET 1993).

Table 20 shows the extent to which each of the skills was developed.

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Table 20: Development of generic skills

	A lot %	Some %	A bit %	Not at all %
Communication in writing	11.6	35.0	28.2	25.2
Verbal (oral) communication	58.4	28.9	10.3	2.4
Planning and organising	33.6	41.7	19.1	5.5
Working in teams	51.8	27.2	14.8	6.2
Using your initiative	53.9	34.3	9.3	2.4
Solving problems	38.0	40.7	18.1	3.0
How to behave at work	61.0	25.4	9.8	3.8

As in ordinary part-time jobs (Smith & Green 2001, p.60), 'behaving at work', 'verbal communication' and 'using your initiative' were the three generic skills most developed. The least most developed was 'communication in writing'. However compared with ordinary part-time jobs in the Smith and Green (2001) study, there was less difference between the highest and lowest scoring skills. 'Working in teams', 'solving problems' and' how to behave at work' all scored higher in SBNAs than in ordinary part-time work.

In order to gain an overall picture of generic skills development, for each SBNA, each skill was assigned a value (three to 'a lot', two to 'some' and so on). These were then added to give a generic skills index for each student which could range from 0 to 21.

The previous project (Smith & Green 2001) had found that the mean generic skills index for the small number of SBNAs in that study was 18.33 compared with 14.50 for non-school based apprentices and trainees and 13.98 for all student-workers. The findings this time were that the mean generic skills index for the 617 SBNAs who completed this question was 15.07. This is not as high as might have been expected from the previous project, but is still higher than the average for student part-time jobs and for non-school-based apprentices and trainees in the Smith and Green (2001) study.

A number of cross-tabulations were carried out on the mean generic skills index, to examine the relationship between the generic skills index and other variables.

By most important method of learning

Higher than average indices were shown by those whose first most important method of learning was off-the-job courses (16.07) and watching others (15.78). The lowest mean generic skills index applied to those whose main method of learning was being shown by fellow workers (14.15).

By type of contract of training

Apprentices showed a slightly higher mean generic skills index (15.27) than trainees (15.05).

By intended post-school destination

Those heading for another traineeship had the highest mean generic skills index (17.73). Also above average were those heading for ordinary jobs and those expecting to continue their apprenticeship. Lowest mean generic skills index were those who were not sure of their destination (14.29) and those intending to go to university (14.82).

By age of fellow workers and by attention of supervisor

The highest generic skills index was among those who worked about equally with adults and teenagers (15.54). Those working mainly with teenagers had an average of only 14.35. There was an association between the index and the amount of discussion between the SBNA and

the supervisor about the SBNA's progress, ranging down from 16.53 for those who discussed their progress often, to 12.78 for those who never discussed their progress.

By mode of off-the-job training

The best mean generic skills index belonged to those who were studying on block release (15.56 at private registered training organisation and 15.37 at TAFE) and the worst (13.80) to those who studied at home in their own time. School (14.62) was the next lowest.

By quality of training

There was a relationship between how clear SBNAs felt about how to do their jobs and how well they developed their generic skills, from 15.79 for those who always felt clear about their tasks (the proxy for quality of training) down to 10.11 for those who were usually unclear.

By industry area

The industries with the highest development of generic skills were cultural/recreational/sporting (16.42), government administration and banking/real estate/finance. The lowest-scoring industries were communications/media/computing, building, retailing, and automotive (all below 14.80). There was considerable variation in the types of generic skills developed in different industry areas. Table 21 shows the industry area which best developed each generic skill.

Table 21: Industry area where each generic skill was best developed

Communication in writing	Government administration
Verbal communication	Cultural/recreational/sporting
Planning and organising	Farming/forestry/mining
Working in teams	Fast food/cafes/restaurants
Using your initiative	Government administration
Solving problems	Farming/forestry/mining
How to behave at work	Manufacturing

By reason for doing

Those who developed their generic skills the most were the SBNAs who liked the idea of gaining practical skills (15.70) and those who wanted the qualification or specific experience in an industry. Lowest scores were those whose parents had told them to do the job (12.67), and those who were doing it for spending money or for living expenses.

By nature of employment

Those employed directly by a company showed slightly higher generic skills indices than those working for a group training company. The main finding, however, for both those employed directly and those working for a group training company, was that those who worked in two or more workplaces developed their generic skills more (0.70 more in each case).

Other learning on the job

Respondents were asked to write down anything else they had learned from their on-the-job training and learning. Two hundred and sixteen responses were given and they were coded into the domains of learning used in a study of young people's learning in their first year of full-time work (Smith 2000, table 22).

Table 22: 'Anything else learned' on the job: By domains of workplace learning

Domain of learning	No.	%
Generic skills	94	43.5
Learning about the occupation	40	18.5
Learning about learning	21	9.7
Learning about the industry	13	6.0
No learning	13	6.0
Technical skills	10	4.6
Learning about the organisation	10	4.6
Other	7	3.2
Knowledge	4	1.9
Learning about oneself	4	1.9
Total	**216**	**100.0**

A wide range of responses is gathered together in this table, and to give a fuller picture, some of the individual comments (positive and negative) are listed below.

Anything else learned from on-the-job training and learning: Selection of responses

Positive

A lot of learning about customer service comes from experience and self confidence.

Always look after your tools.

Apologies go a long way.

Because I am doing a lot of business type subjects at school, I can put into practice what I learn from these while I'm working.

Every three months the safety regulations are updated and every staff member is trained.

Everyone at my workplace is happy to help me any way they can. I guess that's why I enjoy my traineeship so much.

How to advise customers on the correct size shoe for them.

How to communicate with people who are older than you.

How to get on with and tolerate less informed/less educated people.

How to make people feel good about themselves.

I am learning gradually. It will take four years to learn the trade.

I did not improve much in any area because I feel I was already quite competent in most areas from several previous casual jobs.

I enjoy working with my father and like the dairying industry.

I have grown up more. More confident and relaxed.

I have learned a lot about the stock in the store such as figure glass materials, points, fishing tackle.

I have learned how to get to work and on time.

I have learned to be responsible, not going out with friends the night before, not having a hangover or being tired.

I have learnt how to handle the temperament of chefs. There is actually a skill in being able to let their frustration not hurt you emotionally.

I have learnt how to pull my own weight in working with a team on a tight schedule.

I have matured a lot in this training program, it has really taught me how to relate to people.

I learn appropriate temperature to keep food heated or cooled and how to avoid cross contamination.

I learn by watching others and adapting to that. I thought there would be more teaching in classrooms.

I learned how to respect the elderly more, they are a very interesting bunch when you actually take time to sit and chat with them.

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Anything else learned from on-the-job training and learning: Selection of responses (cont.)

Positive

I think it is a great way to go because it gives practical experience which employers look for as well as a certificate in Grade 2 Pharmacy.

I've learned a lot about mass catering as some functions are for 800 people.

I've learned how to put up with people you don't like by still keeping peace between them.

If you are unsure about something ask your manager and then you will know next time.

It is good to work with people who have been doing the job a while and learning their ways of making a job quicker by having a plan.

It's great! I have learnt further customer service. I already have some knowledge as I work at [company name—fast food outlet] as well.

Managing other students into work routines, plant maintenance and teamwork.

Most of all I became aware of what life is really like in the workplace. It was a real eye opening experience for me.

Not to give too much 'cheek'.

Office politics.

The most important thing is how to do ten different things at the same time as well as having people interrupt you.

The safe and not so safe ways to conduct tasks and what we can do to simplify things.

There are heaps of things you have to learn about engines and it will take time to learn them all.

Very happy with this job because they don't just make me do filing all day but want me to learn new things.

Working with [company name—construction company] I cover a wide range of trade practices not just carpentry. I've done plastering, tiling, plumbing, kitchen fitouts.

Negative

I learned how to wash the boss's car.

I learned not to work in the hospitality industry as it is not very glamorous and from my experience, the boss doesn't treat you like a person.

I learned nothing—I know it all. That's why I quit.

I learned that mechanical work is a very difficult profession for women in the workplace where you don't feel wanted. You have to be strong willed.

People of higher status are on power trips. People are not treated equally.

I haven't really been trained yet, I'm not even on the roster.

There has not been a great deal of on site training. No work has been made available because of the uncertainty in the building industry.

They never taught me much. I asked several times but I all got were excuses.

I didn't specifically learn any of these skills through the training because there was NO training!

It is notable that the balance of these comments was found to be far more positive than those made about ordinary student part-time work in the previous project (Smith & Wilson, forthcoming).

Off-the-job training

Almost a quarter of the SBNAs were doing all their training on-the-job (figure 5). A further quarter attended TAFE or another registered training organisation on block release with only 19% going to a training provider on traditional day-release from work. The students' qualitative responses suggested that block release was not necessarily regular, often being structured around school holidays or on an ad hoc basis. Only just over ten per cent of students were undertaking their off-the-job training at school.

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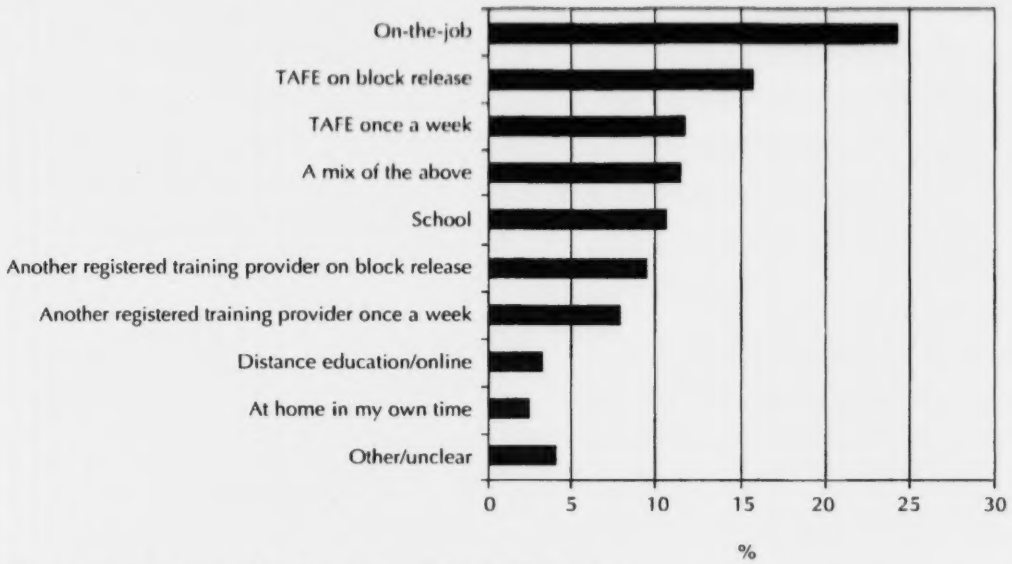
Figure 5: Location of off-the-job training[15]



There were some variations by state, as table 23 illustrates.

Table 23: Mode of off-the-job training: By state

	South Australia		Victoria		Queensland		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TAFE once a week	6	9.4	10	8.2	56	12.8	72	11.5
At TAFE on block release	11	17.2	15	12.3	71	16.2	97	15.5
At another registered training provider once a week	4	6.3	7	5.7	37	8.4	48	7.7
At another registered training provider on block release	4	6.3	6	4.9	49	11.2	59	9.5
School	6	9.4	15	12.3	45	10.3	66	10.6
On-the-job	28	43.8	43	35.2	80	18.3	151	24.2
Distance education/ online	1	1.6	4	3.3	15	3.4	20	3.2
A mix of the above	2	3.1	11	9.0	58	13.2	71	11.4
Other/Unclear	–	–	2	1.6	23	5.3	25	4.0
At home in my own time	2	3.1	9	7.4	4	0.9	15	2.4
Total	**64**	**100.0**	**122**	**100.0**	**438**	**100.0**	**624**	**100.0**

South Australia was the heaviest user of wholly on-the-job traineeships and apprenticeships with Queensland well below the average. In Queensland in 2001 on-the-job traineeships did not receive 'user choice' funding, which would help account for this finding. Queensland SBNAs were the highest users of TAFE. Victorian students were the most likely to be doing all their off-the-job training in their own time, or at school (although the numbers for both were small).

Table 24: Mode of off-the-job training: By industry area

	Farming, forestry, mining	Manufacturing	Building	Retailing	Fast food, cafes, restaurants	Cultural, recreational, sporting	Banking, real estate, finance	Government administration	Health, personal & community services	Communications	Office	Automotive	Other	Total	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	No.	%
TAFE once a week	7.2	24.2	10.0	15.0	9.3	8.3	–	11.1	15.6	7.1	11.8	13.3	–	72	11.6
At TAFE on block release	34.8	24.2	43.3	3.1	15.3	8.3	15.0	–	9.4	10.7	–	36.7	50.0	97	15.6
Another registered training provider once a week	5.8	9.1	13.3	7.5	6.7	8.3	5.0	–	6.3	17.9	11.8	–	–	46	7.4
Another registered training provider on block release	15.9	9.1	6.7	10.0	5.3	–	15.0	16.7	6.3	10.7	23.5	–	–	59	9.5
School	8.7	3.0	3.3	12.5	12.0	25.0	10.0	16.7	6.3	3.6	17.6	10.0	–	66	10.6
On-the-job (classroom)*	15.9	24.2	10.0	30.0	27.3	8.3	35.0	27.8	25.0	25.0	14.7	16.7	33.3	151	24.3
Distance education/online	–	3.0	3.3	3.1	–	8.3	–	16.7	12.5	14.3	2.9	–	–	20	3.2
A mix of the above	11.6	–	6.7	9.4	17.3	25.0	10.0	–	12.5	3.6	11.8	16.7	16.7	71	11.4
Other/Unclear	–	3.0	3.3	5.6	4.0	8.3	–	11.1	–	7.1	5.9	3.3	–	25	4.0
At home in my own time	–	–	–	3.8	2.7	–	10.0	–	6.3	–	–	3.3	–	15	2.4
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**622**	**100.0**

Note: * While the majority of on-the-job responses were removed for analysis for this section (tables 24–26), those where SBNAs said, (in 'other' responses to question 43) that they attended classroom training at work, were retained.

There were also wide variations by industry area, as table 24 illustrates. Retail and fast food were both above average for fully on-the-job traineeships, as were banking/real estate/finance (but with smaller numbers) and 'other'. TAFE training was most common in the traditional trade areas of manufacturing, building, and automotive. Office/business SBNAs were much more likely then the average to be doing their off-the-job training at a private registered training organisation or at school. Additional analysis by type of contract of training showed apprentices heavily concentrated in TAFE (over 45%), whereas trainees were much more evenly distributed across the different modes of delivery. By nature of employment, fully on-the-job training was most common among those who were employed directly. It is likely that these SBNAs worked for large retail or fast food companies. TAFE training was more common among directly-employed SBNAS, while private registered training organisations were used more heavily by group training companies.

Most SBNAs said that their off-the-job training helped in their jobs, with only just over one-quarter (27.6%) saying it did not help, or only helped a bit. Table 25 analyses the responses by mode of delivery of off-the-job training.

Table 25: Does your off-the-job training help at work?

	A lot		Some		A bit		Not at all		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TAFE once a week	27	37.5	28	38.9	15	20.8	2	2.8	72	100.0
At TAFE on block release	30	32.6	38	41.3	19	20.7	5	5.4	92	100.0
At another registered training provider once a week	19	41.3	18	39.1	6	13.0	3	6.5	46	100.0
At another registered training provider on block release	26	44.1	20	33.9	11	18.6	2	3.4	59	100.0
School	12	18.8	28	43.8	17	26.6	7	10.9	64	100.0
on-the-job (classroom)*	6	24.0	10	40.0	4	16.0	5	20.0	25	100.0
Distance education/ online	3	15.0	6	30.0	9	45.0	2	10.0	20	100.0
A mix of the above	23	32.9	30	42.9	14	20.0	3	4.3	70	100.0
Other/Unclear	9	39.1	8	34.8	5	21.7	1	4.3	23	100.0
At home in my own time	3	20.0	8	53.3	3	20.0	1	6.7	15	100.0
Total	**158**	**32.5**	**194**	**39.9**	**103**	**21.2**	**31**	**6.4**	**486**	**100.0**

Non-TAFE registered training organisations appeared to have been viewed as the most useful for the SBNAs, with regular TAFE attendance a fairly close second. School and distance education/online did not rate very highly among students.

Table 26 shows the links in the reverse direction—the amount by which the SBNAs reported that their workplace learning helped them in their off-the-job training.

Table 26: Has what you learned at work helped in your off-the-job training?

	A lot		Some		A bit		Not at all		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TAFE once a week	30	42.9	28	40.0	9	12.9	3	4.3	70	100.0
At TAFE on block release	41	43.6	30	31.9	16	17.0	7	7.4	94	100.0
At another registered training provider once a week	23	47.9	14	29.2	6	12.5	5	10.4	48	100.0
At another registered training provider on block release	25	42.4	22	37.3	11	18.6	1	1.7	59	100.0
School	19	30.2	27	42.9	13	20.6	4	6.3	63	100.0
On-the-job (classroom)	6	24.0	10	40.0	6	24.0	3	12.0	25	100.0
Distance education/ online	4	20.0	8	40.0	5	25.0	3	15.0	20	100.0
A mix of the above	30	44.1	22	32.4	13	19.1	3	4.4	68	100.0
Other/Unclear	11	50.0	6	27.3	4	18.2	1	4.5	22	100.0
At home in my own time	2	13.3	7	46.7	5	33.3	1	6.7	15	100.0
Total	**191**	**39.5**	**174**	**36.0**	**88**	**18.2**	**31**	**6.4**	**484**	**100.0**

Links were slightly higher for private registered training organisations than TAFE and were weakest for those studying online or at home by themselves. They were also fairly weak for those doing their off-the-job training at school. The relatively small numbers studying by 'mixed mode' and 'other' forms of delivery found their work the most use in their off-the-job training. It is interesting to note that those undertaking classroom delivery in workplaces reported lower linkages between work and off-the-job training, in both directions.

One quarter of SBNAs discussed their workplace experience often with their off-the-job trainers, with one-third discussing them 'sometimes'. Some training providers appeared to have made more effort than others to discuss SBNAs' workplace experiences (table 27).

Table 27: Discussion by trainer of SBNA's workplace experiences: Best and worst by mode of delivery

Off-the-job trainer most likely to discuss SBNA's workplace experiences	Off-the-job trainer least likely to discuss SBNA's workplace experiences
Private registered training organisation block release	Distance education/online
On-the-job (classroom)	School
Mixed mode	TAFE block release
Private registered training organisation day release	
('Other' was also high)	

Workplace experiences were more likely to be discussed in the off-the-job training than vice versa. Only one-fifth of SBNA reported that their workplace bosses often discussed their off-the-job training with them. One-third said that it was discussed 'sometimes', 30% 'occasionally' and 16% never. Table 28 shows the differences by mode of off-the-job training.

Table 28: Discussion by workplace supervisor of SBNA's off-the-job training: Best and worst by mode of delivery

Workplace supervisor *most likely* to discuss progress in off-the-job training	Workplace supervisor *least likely* to discuss SBNA's SBNA's progress in off-the-job training
Private registered training organisation block release	At home in my own time
TAFE day release	Distance education/online
TAFE block release	School
Private registered training organisation day release	

One hundred and twenty-three SBNAs chose to make general comments about their off-the-job training. More of these were positive rather than negative, but the balance of comments was noticeably less enthusiastic than those about on-the-job training. A selection of positive and negative comments is given below.

Anything else learned from off-the-job training: Selection of responses

Positive

At off-the-job training we discuss a variety of things and it gives my mind a greater range of understanding about a topic.

All the off-the-job training helped me work at my job placement (sic).

Diseases and injuries that are not common in horses have been covered in the theory of my off-the-job studies.

Every month I have check ups and new booklets etc and have meetings with my off-the-job supervisor.

History on how today's methods have come about.

I am pleased that we have off-the-job training as it is actually helping me quite a bit on the job.

I am very happy with the trainer because they are very helpful to me.

I gained a great deal of theoretical knowledge.

I learnt a lot more about what happens behind the scenes of a business.

I learnt a lot of specific things from the off-the-job training e.g. the jacking point on truck and trailer.

I learn everything about hairdressing because it is a private college.

I like TAFE as it teaches me more about solid timber stuff whereas I don't do much of that at work.

I think the off-the-job training is extremely good and the times fit in.

It's useful to learn at TAFE, even through you may not use it on the job.

It also helped my boss as we go through tasks. I think off-the-job training is important because I can't cover some things in my on-the-job training.

I learnt about body language which helped in dealing and communicating with my manager.

Off-the-job training provides time for me to learn and research more information on the expectations of the workplace and learn more about the corporation.

Other experiences that have happened to other people, and what to do in these circumstances.

TAFE teaches me to deal with many different situations at sea, but at work there is more of a routine of what is done each day.

TAFE was a great experience and I would like it to be full time. I am looking forward to going back next year.

The off-the-job training people give a trainee a lot of support and take time to listen.

The correct way of doing things.

The off-the-job training gives me lots more knowledge on how to do some things in the workshop without having to be shown or ask somebody.

Negative

Most times off-the-job training has little or no relevance to my traineeship.

At work I do a lot of computer-based work including records and data-entry. My off-the-job training I found could have been more detailed in these areas.

They were very tardy in getting my course available for me to use, hence disadvantaging me.

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Anything else learned from off-the-job training: Selection of responses (cont.)

Negative

I didn't see a lot of my trainer so we didn't get too far past the OH&S and learning about tools.

I don't feel that the TAFE courses prepare people for the real work experience.

I don't have much time for completing my off-the-job training, which is distance education from TAFE. I am falling very far behind.

I have not yet had training with TAFE. It was organised but never followed through.

In my off-the-job training here were only extremely minor similarities in the topics and it did not really relate at all to my workplace.

The off-the-job training is useless ... the idea is for students to sit down and write documents required for traineeship completion.

Quite a few of my modules inter-related and it got quite frustrating learning the same things twice.

The negative comments related primarily to lack of relevance to workplace tasks and to poor teaching or organisation. Positive comments had a number of themes, including learning a wider range of tasks than could be done at work, learning underlying knowledge and theory, and receiving individual attention from the trainer.

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Conclusions

The overall impression gained from the analysis of the 641 questionnaires is that undertaking an SBNA seems to be a highly positive experience for the majority of those involved. It does need to be acknowledged that those returning the questionnaire might not be entirely typical of the full population of SBNAs, but as discussed in the research methodology section, it is reasonable to assume that the responses may be indicative of SBNAs as a whole.

Participation

Students undertaking SBNAs are more likely than an average post-compulsory age school student to be white Australian-born, living outside a capital city, female, and from a lower socio-economic status. They intend to complete year 12 but are much less likely than average to want to go to university. They have generally had previous experience of work.

The students generally had quite clear reasons for wishing to undertake an SBNA, generally to get a qualification or to gain specific experience in an industry. The SBNA in a large proportion of cases confirmed their career choice for them, although in some cases it gave them the chance to try out, and reject, the industry area. Comments indicate that many were specifically attracted to the mix of work and study involved in an SBNA. Some made it very plain that they had always wanted to undertake an apprenticeship and that the SBNA would give them a head start. A small but still significant number of SBNAs were more instrumental in their attitude, hoping that the SBNA would help them get a part-time job at university or merely wishing to have the extra spending money (one commented that it offered the chance to get a part-time job outside the normal retail or fast food options).

Role of schools

Schools had a large role to play in recruiting students to SBNAs. Sixty-five per cent of SBNAs heard about the SBNA through a teacher or saw it advertised on a school notice board. A further group of nearly 5% heard about the SBNA from a work placement co-ordinator external to school. It was clear that some schools made it easier than others for SBNAs once the students had started their jobs. Nearly half of the SBNAs said that their jobs caused timetabling difficulties. Some schools had a free day timetabled each week and some SBNAs found that their employers were willing for them to work on those days. Other students had to catch up on all the work missed and found this quite difficult. There was a fair amount of 'processing' of SBNAs back at school with most students talking about their jobs in class at least occasionally and three-quarters talking about them with friends. Around half of students also reported that their SBNA helped them with their other school work. On all these indicators there was more of a link between SBNAs and school than there is between ordinary part-time work and school.

While schools played a big role in recruiting students to SBNAs and some role in assisting their progress, not much off-the-job training was delivered in schools, either by school teachers or by visiting trainers. On most indicators of quality of off-the-job training, the

schools that did provide off-the-job training scored lower than TAFE and other registered training organisations.

Role of employer and group training company

Most SBNAs were very happy with their workplaces although a few reported feeling exploited and undertrained. One commented that she felt 'trapped'. However very few had become so dissatisfied that they left their jobs. Nearly one-fifth of SBNAs had worked for the employer before commencing their SBNA; either as an ordinary part-time worker or on work experience or a placement. Such students were more likely to be recruited directly by the employer rather than through a group training company. Employers were from a wide range of industries and there were clear differences between industry areas. For example, the old apprentice industries provided close supervision by an adult mentor but did not offer the chance for much responsibility. The newer industries, by contrast, seemed to offer more autonomy to the SBNAs.

Most employers offered quite structured training to the SBNAs, with the students reporting that they mostly learned from being shown by a trainer or a fellow worker. There was much more structure to the training than for ordinary part-time student jobs. Students' tasks included a variety of responsible and complex jobs, much more so than the normal range of student part-time work. There was a high degree of development of generic skills. Such skills were developed more than in ordinary part-time work, although the outstanding results for the small number of SBNAs in the previous study (Smith & Green 2001) were not replicated to such a degree with this larger sample.

There was some evidence that those SBNAs employed directly by employers had slightly better learning outcomes than those employed by group training companies but this finding was quite weak. Certainly group training company SBNAs were more likely to have been recruited through school than were other SBNAs, suggesting a somewhat weaker link between the SBNA and the workplace.

Role of training provider

Although most SBNAs were quite satisfied with their training provider there was clearly less enthusiasm for off-the-job training than for workplace learning. Some students mentioned reasons why they found the off-the-job training useful, covering most points raised in the literature on apprenticeship and traineeship (e.g. Harris et al. 1998). A small number of students said categorically that they would prefer all on-the-job training—and indeed nearly a quarter of all SBNAs were being trained fully on the job. Most students who had off-the-job training did not seem in principle opposed to it but some cited various problems to do with poor organisation, low quality learning materials and low grade assessment. However some students were very enthusiastic about their training provider and it was clear that many appreciated the individual attention they received.

It was noticeable that training providers were much more likely to discuss the students' workplace experiences than were workplace supervisors to discuss the students' training experiences. Some providers (particularly non-TAFE registered training organisations) appeared to make great efforts to link the training very closely to students' jobs. This was not necessarily a good thing, as students' responses indicated some valuing the wider range of learning they undertook at TAFE and other providers, which related to experiences they could not have in their particular workplace. Distance education and online delivery, and self-paced learning at home, fared very poorly in most measures of quality of off-the-job training. Students clearly fared much better when they were part of a face-to-face learning group. School was the exception to this rule.

Role of individual apprentice or trainee

The success of the SBNA appeared to vary somewhat with the nature of the individual student. For example those undertaking the SBNA for more instrumental reasons—to earn money, to get part-time work while at university—were likely to have lower learning outcomes on some measures (generic skills development) than those who had a genuine interest in the industry area. As with all young people in jobs, the SBNAs varied a great deal in their sophistication and the amount of learning they could derive from their jobs (Smith 2000). Few students reported significant difficulty with fitting in their school work as well as their jobs, although the difficulty was greater than for the average part-time student worker. One student commented that it was harder for the more 'academic' student to do an SBNA as he felt that not enough account was taken of the need to spend a lot of time on more rigorous homework associated with academic subjects. The total learning experience for each apprentice or trainee is likely to be affected by the particular combination for that SBNA of motivation, industry area, mix of other school subjects and so on, as well as by the efficacy of the on- and off-job-training given.

Success

It has been pointed out by many writers that apprenticeships and traineeships offer an ideal way to introduce young people to working life. The combination of work and study allows for the young people to progress in their careers and there is a tradition of employers caring for and mentoring young workers in such contracts of training (Smith 2000). There were however some misgivings, when school-based new apprenticeships were introduced, about whether such arrangements could combine with schooling. This study has found that in most cases this combination appears to have been very successful.

One factor in the success of SBNAs is that most senior school students are working anyway, and so SBNAs are not significantly different from their peers. Compared with ordinary part-time work, SBNAs score higher on a number of important indicators:

- enjoyment of job
- attention of a supervisor
- working with adults rather than other teenagers
- level of responsibility.

These indicators were all shown in the previous study (Smith & Green 2001) to be associated with higher learning outcomes.

The addition of off-the-job training to the workplace component of the SBNA appears to enhance enjoyment and learning outcomes. Students appeared to welcome the addition of another interested adult to their development, although in a number of cases they voiced some specific complaints about their training providers. Several students however commented on the way in which off-the-job training added to their overall understanding of their field of practice. Most valued the extra qualification (additional to their school qualifications) which they would gain as a result of their study.

The previous study noted the superiority of learning outcomes for school-based apprentices and trainees compared with other school students who were undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships independently. While the current study did not survey non-school-based new apprentices, there were some clear findings about links between school and the workplace which were found to be much greater than in ordinary part-time work. The students' jobs were discussed quite frequently at school and with friends, and they noted that

their jobs helped them in other subjects. Added to the fact that most had found out about their jobs through school, it was evident that SBNAs were legitimised in the eyes of the school in the way that other part-time jobs were clearly not. However students undertaking their off-the-job training at school did not appear so satisfied with it as did students attending other registered training organisations. One explanation for this is that those undertaking SBNAs may be, on the whole, more eager to escape the school environment than other senior school students. This would also go some way to explaining the greater satisfaction of SBNAs with workplace training than off-the-job training in general.

The survey did not find the same outstanding level of learning in SBNAs as had been found in the original project (Smith & Green 2001), where only 28 SBNAs had been included in a wider survey. For example that project found a mean generic skills index of 18.33 for SBNAs, while the current project found the mean index was 15.07. The much larger population of SBNAs in the current project has corrected what was evidently an atypical group of SBNAs in the former project. However, the findings still show superior learning outcomes; the mean generic skills index for SBNAs of 15.07 compares with 13.98 for all paid student-workers (Smith & Green 2001).

What problems remain?

While the overall tenor of the findings is very positive, some problems exist, as the analysis revealed. These include:

- The low number of hours worked by SBNAs (mean of 10.5) is significantly lower than that recommended (for example by DETE 2000) and it is difficult to see how students could complete the hours required even for a traineeship within senior high school years. It is interesting to note in this regard that both Queensland and Victoria have recently introduced rules about minimum numbers of hours in SBNAs. In Queensland the rule is 48 days per 12-month period; and in Victoria 15 hours per week averaged over a 24-month period or 10 hours per week averaged over a 36 week period, depending on the length of the Training Agreement.
- The low number of hours worked also raises the question whether school-based traineeships can be regarded as fully equivalent to those undertaken by full-time workers.
- It was evident that many SBNAs were undertaking extra work or training during school holidays to 'get their hours up', and this may place undue stress on such students.
- SBNAs are concentrated in the same industries as ordinary part-time jobs for school students, although the concentration is not so great as in ordinary part-time work. One explanation for the concentration is that ordinary part-time jobs may be being 'converted' to SBNAs by major employers capitalising on funding opportunities. This concentration might be of concern to some commentators, with an implication that options for SBNAs are comparatively limited compared with, for example, work experience and VET programs.
- The evidence of poor quality practices from some training providers adds to the weight of evidence provided by Andrews et al. (2000).
- Lack of linkages between on- and off-the-job training may be seen as a problem by some, although such findings are typical of apprenticeship and traineeship research in general, and it has been argued quite strongly elsewhere that the lack of linkages is not necessarily a cause for concern (e.g. Smith 1998; Harris et al. 1998).
- Significant problems exist in timetabling students' working hours around school, and students are too often left to solve the problems themselves. This seems unreasonable considering that the findings of the study suggest that schools are highly instrumental in recruiting students into SBNAs.

- There was some evidence, although weak, that directly-employed students had somewhat better learning experiences than those working for a group training company.
- There seemed to be a tendency for some students to see SBNAs as a training course rather than an employment relationship, and their hours at work as a placement not a job.

The positive findings of the study help to explain the rapid growth of SBNAs in Australia and confirm the usefulness of SBNAs for many students who find the combination of work and study attractive for various reasons. Some of the findings may be of use to organisations wishing to promote further growth; for example the findings about reasons for undertaking a SBNA may have some marketing value. Marketing could be targeted to different groups of students who might be attracted by different aspects of an SBNA. The impressions given by the student responses were that school-based new apprenticeships were functioning well for most students. The problems which have been identified need further research, and attention by state governments, in order to improve the quality of the experience for all students.

Endnotes

1 For the purposes of brevity the term SBNA (school-based new apprentice/apprenticeship) is used throughout the report to refer to the student/program, although in some states such as Queensland there is a preference for referring to apprentices and trainees separately rather than as New Apprentices. Moreover, different abbreviations are used in different systems such as SAT, SNAPs.

2 Of the three states in the study, two did not provide funding to schools for involvement in SBNAs. Queensland, however, provided a commencement payment of $500 to schools for 'signing up' each SBNA, with a greater payment for certain equity groups.

3 'Modern Australian Apprenticeship and Traineeship System' the short-lived umbrella term for apprenticeships and traineeships, preceding the current term New Apprenticeships.

4 These concerns appear to relate to delivery of off-the-job training by school teachers and are part of more general concerns in some quarters relating to VET in schools.

5 In this respect SBNAs may be less well-supported than those undertaking vocational placements, since the latter often have access to co-ordinators funded through the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation and other means.

6 The small amount of funding for the project meant that the survey could not be augmented by other research methods. Although triangulation could not therefore be employed, the previous project had found that findings from a school student survey were largely in line with findings from case studies and employer and teacher interviews; therefore a survey was felt to be reliable.

7 The index was gained by weighting the first, second and third responses to the appropriate question and dividing by the average number of students who answered the question.

8 In cases where responses to other questions, like length of contract of training or the certificate level of the qualification, indicated that the student had almost certainly mistaken the type of his/her contract of training, the response was re-classified as 'not sure'.

9 Group training companies are large employers of apprentices and trainees. They 'lease' their employees to host employers, performing all the normal employer functions such as payroll and personnel issues. They were introduced to boost apprentice and trainee numbers particularly (but not only) in industries where employers were reluctant or unable to commit to long-term investment in apprentices and trainees.

10 While these two groups of students were obviously employed directly, they did not seem to regard themselves as working for an employer in the normal sense.

11 10.5 was the mean. The mode (most common) was 8 hours and the median was 9.

12 Other recent Australian studies (Robinson 1996; DETE 2000) have found similar average working hours for part-time student work.

13 Fifteen hours represent half of a standard working week assuming one day per week spent nominally on off-the-job training. Fully on-the-job SBNAs would need to spend around 18–19 hours a week at work to represent half of a full-time position.

14 How clear the SBNA was about workplace tasks was used as a proxy for quality of training, since an objective measure of quality of training would be impossible.

15 The categories in figure 6 are those given in the questionnaire. After inspection of the relatively large number of 'other' responses, the following recoding took place to give the results shown in the figure. 'On-the-job' includes classroom training at the workplace (including where a trainer from outside comes in); 'TAFE once a week' and 'registered training organisation once a week' includes once a fortnight; 'block release' includes school holidays and once a month; 'at school' includes a TAFE teacher visiting school.

16 However, it is not clear whether any state departments actually check the number of hours worked in any apprenticeship or traineeship (not just school-based) at completion.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Learning and training in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships

Section 1: About you

We have asked a few questions about you and your background. Please be assured that these details will be kept confidential and that your name will not be recorded on your questionnaire.

1. Is your school in a

☐ capital city (ie Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide)

☐ regional city (more than 10,000 population)

☐ small town (500-10,000 population)

☐ remote area (in town less than 500, or outside town)

2. Is your school

☐ a government school ☐ a Catholic school

☐ an independent school

3. Which year of school are you in?

☐ Year 10 ☐ Year 11 ☐ Year 12 ☐ Year 13

4. What age are you?

☐ 16 ☐ 18 ☐ Other

☐ 17 ☐ 19

5. What gender are you?

☐ Male ☐ Female

6. Do any of the following apply? (Tick as many as are relevant)

☐ You are Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander

☐ English is not the main language spoken in your home

☐ English is the main language spoken at home but at least one of your parents was born in a non-English speaking country

7. Do you have a physical disability?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please briefly describe your disability.....

8. Do you have a learning disability?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please briefly describe your disability.....

9. This question asks you to think about your family and money. Do you consider that your family's financial situation is:

☐ Above average ☐ About average ☐ Below average

10. Compared with others in your year, are your school marks generally:

☐ Above average ☐ About average ☐ Below average

11. When do you plan to leave school? (Tick one box)

☐ At the end of Year 10
☐ At the end of Year 11
☐ At the end of Year 12
☐ At the end of Year 13
☐ Not sure

12. Did you ever have a formal paid job before you started this apprenticeship or traineeship? (Tick as many as apply)

☐ Yes, with the same employer with whom I have my apprenticeship or traineeship
☐ Yes, with a different employer (do not include babysitting or newspaper delivery)
☐ Yes, babysitting or newspaper delivery
☐ No

13. Immediately after school, which <u>one</u> of the following are you <u>most</u> likely to do:

☐ A university course full-time (straight away or deferred)?
☐ A TAFE course full-time?
☐ Continue the apprenticeship you are enrolled in?
☐ An apprenticeship (not one you are enrolled in)?
☐ Continue the traineeship you are enrolled in?
☐ A traineeship (not one you are enrolled in)?
☐ Full-time or part-time work but not in an apprenticeship or traineeship?
☐ Not sure
☐ Other.....

Section 2: About your apprenticeship or traineeship

Some general questions

14. Are you still employed as a school-based apprentice or trainee? (Tick one box)

☐ Yes (go to Q 16) ☐ No (go to Q 15)

15. If you have left the apprenticeship/traineeship please give the main reason why you left (Tick one box)

☐ Decided I did not like the occupation
☐ Did not like the job for some other reason
☐ Was dismissed from the job
☐ The job ended for some other reason (eg workplace closed down)
☐ Found the training too difficult
☐ Did not like the training for some other reason
☐ Changed school subject choice
☐ It was too hard to fit in the work around my other school work
☐ I have completed the apprenticeship/traineeship
☐ Other (please specify).....

We would still like you to answer the rest of the questionnaire although you have left. Answer as though you are still there.

16. Is it an apprenticeship or a traineeship? *(tick one box)*

- ☐ An apprenticeship?
- ☐ A traineeship?
- ☐ Not sure which

17. During which year of school did your apprenticeship or traineeship start? *(Tick one box)*

- ☐ Year 10
- ☐ Year 11
- ☐ Year 12
- ☐ Year 13

18. How long have you been working as an apprentice or trainee? *(Tick one box)*

- ☐ 1 week to 4 weeks
- ☐ 1-6 months
- ☐ 7-12 months
- ☐ 13 months – 2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years

19. How long did you expect the apprenticeship/traineeship to last altogether (from when you started it)?

- ☐ 12 months
- ☐ 13 months - 2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years

20. Your employment as an apprentice or trainee. Please select one of the following answers

- ☐ I am employed directly by a company and have only worked for one company as an apprentice or trainee
- ☐ I am employed directly by a company and have worked for two or more companies as an apprentice of trainee
- ☐ I am employed by a Group Training Company and have only worked for one host employer as an apprentice or trainee
- ☐ I am employed by a Group Training Company and have worked for two or more host employers
- ☐ Other. Please give details.....

21. About how many hours a week (average) do you attend work? ..... hrs

22. Do you attend work (tick as many as apply):

- ☐ for a set number of hours each week on school day(s)?
- ☐ for a set number of hours each week including weekends?
- ☐ extra hours in the school holidays?
- ☐ Other *please specify*.....

23. In what sort of industry is the apprenticeship or traineeship? (Tick one box)

- ☐ Farming, forestry, fishing, mining
- ☐ Manufacturing (in a factory or similar)
- ☐ Building including electrical and plumbing
- ☐ Retailing (shop work)
- ☐ Fast food, cafes or restaurants
- ☐ Cultural, recreational or sporting
- ☐ Banking/real estate/insurance
- ☐ Government administration including education and defence
- ☐ Health, personal and community services (including child care centres)
- ☐ Communications/media/computing
- ☐ Other (please give details).....

24. How did you find out about the apprenticeship or traineeship?(Tick one box)

- ☐ Through a teacher or co-ordinator at my school
- ☐ I saw it advertised on a school notice-board
- ☐ Through a work placement co-ordinator external to my school (eg local regional co-ordinator)
- ☐ A family member told me about it
- ☐ A friend told me about it
- ☐ I already worked for the employer
- ☐ I did work experience there
- ☐ I did a vocational placement there
- ☐ Other (please give details).....

25. Reason for doing a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship

This question asks you to think about some reasons why school students do school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and then to choose the three most important reasons for you.

Read these reasons why school students get school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Circle the ones that applied to you:

a. I wanted the qualification
b. I'd done a VET course and wanted to build on that
c. I or my family needed the money for living expenses/ to enable me financially to stay on at school
d. I wanted extra spending money
e. I wanted general experience of work
f. I wanted specific experience in an industry I would like to work in later
g. I thought I would prefer it to doing more academic subjects at school
h. I liked the idea of gaining practical skills
i. To help me get a good part-time job when I go to University or other tertiary course
j. My parent(s) told me to do it
k. Other.....

26. Now choose the three most important from the above list for you in relation to your school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, and write the corresponding letter in order of importance:

☐ Most important

☐ Second most important

☐ Third most important

27. How much do you enjoy the job? (Tick one box)

☐ A lot ☐ Some ☐ A bit ☐ Not at all

28. How hard is it to fit in time for your school work as well as the job?(Tick one box)

☐ Very hard ☐ Quite hard ☐ Not hard

29. Has doing your apprenticeship or traineeship helped you in your choice of career?

- ☐ Yes, I have decided I want to pursue a career in this area
- ☐ Yes, I have decided I don't want a career in this area
- ☐ No, I am still undecided
- ☐ No, it wasn't meant to be a career choice anyway
- ☐ Other.....

30. Please add any other comments you would like to give us about your school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, or which might help to explain your answers

.....
.....
.....

Section 3:Learning from the workplace component of your apprenticeship or traineeship

Now we want you to answer some questions about what you learn and how you are trained at work. If you have been in more than one workplace as part of your apprenticeship or traineeship please answer for the one where you spent the longest period of time.

31. About your job

Please write a couple of sentences describing what you do at work.

.....
.....

32. *At the beginning of the job did you have a formal induction? This is when someone tells you about the workplace and the way it operates, and the rules you have to follow.*

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please say approximately how many hours the induction lasted.....

33. How have you learnt what to do at work?
This question asks you to think about some ways people learn at work and then choose the three which you used most.

Read these ways in which people learn at work and circle the ones that applied to you:

a. Watching others
b. Being shown by a trainer or supervisor
c. Being shown by fellow worker(s)
d. Reading company manuals
e. Doing an off-the-job course (separate from the regular off-the-job training which forms part of the apprenticeship or traineeship)
f. Asking questions of a supervisor
g. Asking questions of a fellow-worker
h. Trial and error ('having a go')
i. Other .....

34. Now choose the three from the above list that work best for you in your job, and write them in order of importance:

☐ Most important

☐ Second most important

☐ Third most important

35. How much responsibility would you say you had in this job? (Tick one box)

☐ A lot ☐ Some ☐ A bit ☐ None

36. Working with adults (Tick one of the following)

☐ I spend most of my time working with adult workers
☐ I spend most of my time working with teenage workers
☐ I work about equally with adults and teenagers

37. Do you discuss your progress at work with your boss or supervisor on a regular basis?

☐ Often ☐ Occasionally
☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

38. Did you develop the following general skills in this job?

You might have learned or developed some 'general skills' in this job. These are skills which could be used in lots of places. You probably had some general skills to some extent already. In this case we want to know whether you developed them further.

(Tick one box on each line).

	A lot	*Some*	*A bit*	*Not at all*
Communication in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Verbal (oral) communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning and organising	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working in teams	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using your initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solving problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
How to behave at work	☐	☐	☐	☐

39. Is there an important specific skill someone would need in order to do this job?

Examples might be laying paving stones, doing an oil change, or operating a cash register.

Please write it down and then circle one of the four responses to say how well you learned this skill in this job.

Special skill.....

I learned it very well/ I learned it quite well/ I learned it a bit/ I knew it already

Please list up to three other specific skills which you learned in this job

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

40. How well have you been trained for the job? (Tick one)

- ☐ I always feel clear about how to carry out tasks
- ☐ Sometimes I am unclear about how to carry out tasks
- ☐ I am usually unclear about how to carry out tasks

41. We are very interested in anything else you think you learned from your on-the-job training and learning. Make your comments as broad as you like.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section 4:Your off-the-job learning

42. What level is your apprenticeship or traineeship and what is its title?
(eg Certificate II in Retail Operations)

Tick one and complete the name

- ☐ Certificate II in.....
- ☐ Certificate III in .....
- ☐ Certificate IV in .....

43. Do you do your off-the-job training

- ☐ At TAFE once a week
- ☐ At TAFE on block release
- ☐ At another training provider (RTO) once a week
- ☐ At another training provider (RTO) on block release
- ☐ At school
- ☐ All on the job
- ☐ Distance education/ on-line
- ☐ A mix of the above (please give details).....
- ☐ Other (please give details).....

44. Does your off-the-job training help at work? (Tick one box)

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ A bit
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Not at all

Comment.....

45. Do you discuss your progress in your off-the-job training with your workplace boss or supervisor?

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

46. Has what you learned at work helped you in your off-the-job training? (Tick one box)

☐ A lot ☐ A bit
☐ Some ☐ Not at all

Comment.....

47. Do you discuss your workplace experiences with your off-the-job trainer(s)?

☐ Often ☐ Occasionally
☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

48. .We are very interested in anything else you think you learned from your off-the-job training. Please add your comments here. Make your comments as broad as you like.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section 5:General questions about links from your apprenticeship and traineeship to school

49. Has what you learned in your on-the-job training or your off-the-job training helped you with your other school work?

☐ A lot
☐ Some
☐ A bit
☐ Not at all

Comment.....

50. Back at school have you discussed what you did or learned in this job? (Circle one option on each line)

In class time: Often/occasionally/never

With friends: Often/occasionally/never

51. Has doing the apprenticeship or traineeship caused problems with timetabling your other school subjects?

☐ Yes, but the school sorted out the problems
☐ Yes, and I had to sort them out myself
☐ No
☐ Please give details.....

Thank you for your time!

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